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"The Original Independent Online Magazine"
(Since 1987 - Our 11th Year)

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The Publisher, Staff & Editors

From the Editor's Desk...

This is a copy of a letter I sent to the Mayor's office here in Jacksonville Florida. I wonder if anything will come of it. Especially after having gone through this latest example of tiptop municipale expertise. Hizzoner Delaney had more excuses than results to offer the good citizens of this city. In light of this recent "weather related" experience, how DARE the Mayor and his Cronies try to peddle the poppycock that this city is ready to handle a Hurricane or any other powerful weather system. My opinion is .. when Jacksonville's number comes up and its only a matter of time.. this city will be brought to its

knees and stay there for what will easily amount to weeks of extreme hardship and months of "executive orders" and "municipal mandates.. In other words, God help the taxpayers and residents in this City. Jacksonville Florida is not, in any way shape or form, ready to handle a Major Weather System or any other disastrous, city encompassing, Event. Except, of course, in "hizzoner's" vivid imagination.

Come now, Mayor Delaney its time you came back down to earth and stopped treating the citizens and taxpayers of Jacksonville, Florida like mushrooms. (kept in the dark and fed manure) Put Station 15 back on full service and bring a screeching halt to the smoke and mirrors about this city's disaster recovery preparedness. A category one storm could easily paralyze this city for weeks. Most of the tradesmen and service people are well aware of the potentially disastrous problems. Why is it the City's "so called professionals" being paid the big bucks are not? Mayor Delaney; Please, bring the city's leaders back to reality and start functioning like a Mayor instead of a glad handing figurehead. The time for leadership action on your part is now. Else, it is certain the VOTERS will do their "thing" at election time. I might add, that the "Emergency, Disaster, Civil Defense Team" or whatever its called this week needs to be taken out of the hands of civilians playing the role and given to professionals in the Police Department under FED "Emergency Services" provisions and grants. Then and only then will this reporter trust such an endeavor. As it sits now, its no more than a limp sign post needing a place to point.

For example;

Here we are nearing the end of a hectic week of Brush Fires generated by a severe heat wave, drought, careless citizens and malicious firebugs. What did we learn from this past week of Brush Fires, Choking Smoke and general disruption of our daily lives? How about the callous manner in which a certain TV station, in chasing the ratings, decided to capitalize on this fire emergency. They simply had to call it a "firestorm." Talk about "selling a mediocre story about Brush Fires!! The constant reporting that made every conceivable effort to magnify the seriousness of the large but very ordinary brush fires. Probably to justify the naming of the Brush Fires as a "Firestorm". The marketing Genius at that TV Station ought to ask a survivor of the London Blitz, Dresden Firestorm, Hamburg Firestorm and Tokyo Firestorm about what a REAL firestorm is like. Every cloud has a silver lining... Perhaps this TV station did something good after all, you see the Mayor and his handy-dandy non-Florida Certified Fire Chief had all sorts of lame excuses to offer about why the Brush Fires seemingly "called all the shots". Please don't misunderstand me, the Police, Fire and all other personnel in the trenches were wonderful. They broke their ever lovin' butts trying to do the right thing. The City's Leaders let them down too. The Obvious... We have two super huge bodies of water at our "beck and call" they are called the St. John's River and the Atlantic Ocean. Obviously, the geography lesson is very much needed. Why... when we find the other City Agency The JEA is crying about water pressure, shortages, manpower problems etc., do we not find a committee in place to study the feasibility of putting a "Fire Water High Pressure Distribution System" in place that'll take the unusually heavy load off the City's drinking water supply when there are such Fire Emergencies?? Mr. Mayor, salt water and/or river water can extinguish fires just as quickly as the City's Drinking Water. Besides. we then would be able to bring high pressure water supplies directly to the repetitious problem areas thus eliminating the slow and inefficient water taker shuttles.

The not so Obvious...

To take the thought a step or two further, what would stop the City from erecting a spraying system similar to those used in mega-farming where the systems could be strategically placed to CONTAIN and EXTINGUISH any future brush fires. This would free up the Fire Companies to respond quickly to life and property threatening situations without thinning frontline defenses against such brush fires.

The Plea...

Mr. Mayor, this City's needs in the areas of Water Management, Fire Control and Disaster Management are screaming for major upgrading. Are we ever to see these things come to pass or will we be forced to endure a continued litany of excuses, bans and other sidestepping actions that lead nowhere except for perhaps very temporary "fixes"???? Folks, Jacksonville is a wonderful city. It kills me be witness to the gross lack of foresight and wisdom jumping uu at every turn.

I could say its politics as usual but that's not entirely accurate... at least with politics, you get to see some positive results. These guys simply "do their thing" and ignore the overall welfare of the city.

Here's another example: A few of the Heads of this city are also ex State employee's. That's fine, but when they are quietly introducing legislation before the City Council to be able to use their State time tacked onto their City Time thus increasing their length of service... to gain retirement conditions (time served) to both increase benefits and afford possible "double dipping" for the Mayor, City Attorney and others.

If that's the case, what about those folks who served time in the Military, worked for private companies or were in their own business before entering public service??

Should they too, be given "Gain Time" to grab full city pensions without the length of required CITY service being met?? I feel its a ripoff! And an insult to all those City workers who worked the full twenty to be able to retire at full benefits!!

Agree? Disagree?? ... Let me hear from you.

Ralph

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STReport Headline News

LATE BREAKING INDUSTRY-WIDE NEWS

Weekly Happenings in the Computer World
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Things You Didn't Know About Computers JUN 17, 1998, M2 Communications -
As part of the celebrations for the 50th anniversary of the birth of the

modern computer, ICL presents the following facts.

The abacus, a simple counting aid, is said to have been invented in Babylonia (now Iraq) in the fourth century B.C.

The first mechanical calculator was built in 1623 by a German professor called Wilhelm Schickard. It worked but never made it beyond the prototype stage.

The original idea for the modern computer came from Charles Babbage who conceived his steam powered "Difference Engine" in the 1820s.

During World War II, code breaker Alan Turing designed a special purpose-built computer called Colossus which was used to break the German enigma (military communications) code, saving thousands of allied lives.

Editor Note: (This is not entirely TRUE... the Enigma machine was STOLEN from the Germans during the Invasion of Poland and later in the war another was acquired when a U-Boat was captured by the US Navy (U-251?) ...rfm

It was Britain that built the world's first electronic digital, stored-program, computer, known as 'Baby'. It weighed 1 ton, was 16 feet long, 7 feet high and 2 feet deep and used 4kW of electricity to power around 600 vacuum tubes. Baby was built by the University of Manchester. ICL has sponsored the rebuild of Baby.

ICL's Trimetra server is 25 million times more powerful than Baby and has 64 million times the memory. An ICL smart card is 4 million times more powerful than Baby.

Ferranti Computers (a forerunner ICL company) sold the first Mark 1 computer in 1951 which was based on Baby. The computer undertook the design calculations for the St. Lawrence Seaway and was used by the Met. Office for weather forecasting.

The first floppy disk was built by IBM in 1967.

Intel produced the first microprocessor in 1971. It cost US\$200 and could process 60,000 operations per second. It used 2300 transistors, based on 10-micron technology.

Atari produced the first commercial video game, Pong, in 1972.

The MITS Altair 8800 was launched in 1975 as the first "personal" computer.

The first Apple computer was sold in 1976. It came in kit form and cost US\$666.66.

The first demonstration of the Space Invaders game was made by Taito in Japan in 1979. In the same year Atari produced the first coin-operated Asteroids game machine.

The first IBM PC came with just 16KB of memory.

Once the UK's flagship computer manufacturer, ICL is today a leading supplier of IT services and plans to relist on the London Stock Exchange in 2000.

The UK has the fastest growing software and services sector in Europe, worth over GBP 15 billion (UK growth rate 21% per annum). Shares in IT services companies are booming and have outperformed the FTSE 100 by over 50% since January 1998.

The Commodore 64 microcomputer is the best selling computer of all time, with estimated sales of 17-22 million units.

Microsoft Windows was originally called Interface Manager.

A report by the Baruch Collette-Harris Poll (1997) states that 45% of Internet users are over the age of 40, and 19% are 50 or over.

Saudi Arabia confines Internet access to universities and hospitals.

1995 saw the first official Internet wiretap in the US by the Secret Service and Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). It resulted in the apprehension of three individuals who were illegally manufacturing and selling cell phone cloning equipment and electronic devices.

Senior.com, an information web site aimed at people over 50, is currently ranked as the best web site on the Internet in the 'Web 100' rankings.

In 1993 there were 130 websites world-wide. Now there are over two million.

There are at least 40 million internet e-mail addresses in use world-wide.

In 1945 the then-chairman of IBM predicted there would only ever be a need for 5 computers worldwide.

ICL predicts that in 50 years time there may be as many as 1,000 microchips (mini-computers) for every person on the planet.

Fifty years ago this week the modern computer was born when engineers at the University of Manchester ran 'Baby' - the world's first computer capable of storing a program in its memory. To mark the 50th anniversary of Baby, ICL and the Computer Conservation Society have rebuilt Baby which now resides in the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester. This week will feature a series of celebrations culminating in the replica Baby re-running the original program 50 years later to the nearest minute.

Florida Woman Gives Birth Live On the Internet

A 40-year-old Florida woman gave birth to a boy Tuesday in what was billed as the first-ever live birth on the Internet before an estimated audience of two million people, a cable health network said. "The baby was just born. Everything's fine. Everyone's in good shape," America's Health Network spokeswoman Barbara Rodriguez said. The mother, identified only as Elizabeth, had labor induced at 6 a.m. EDT and gave birth at 10:40 a.m. EDT, Rodriguez said.

The network promoted the birth at Arnold Palmer Hospital for Women and Children as an educational event. Crews turned a hospital room into a television studio and the birth was shot from a "discreet" angle over the mother's shoulder. Doctors said Elizabeth was a perfect candidate for the event. She already had three children and her previous deliveries had

been swift. In addition, she had already decided to have labor induced, a necessity for timely delivery of the event to an Internet audience.

The network said it had been prepared for an audience of two million, but many would-be viewers were not able to log onto the site. America's Health Network, which films at Universal Studios Florida in Orlando and reaches 7.2 million cable subscribers around the United States. The Web site of the health network is at <http://www.ahn.com>.

Yahoo! Most Popular Web Site in May

Yahoo! Inc.'s Internet site, the consistent pacesetter for Web traffic, drew in 36% more Web surfers in May than its nearest competitor, according to an industry report. Some 30.6 million individuals traveled last month to where they accessed Yahoo!'s services, which include news, Internet search, and e-mail, Internet research firm RelevantKnowledge Inc. said. Sites operated by online giant America Online Inc. were the second most trafficked, with 22.8 million unique visitors, followed by software company Netscape Communications Corp., with 18.8 million individuals.

Judge Clears Way For Bigger MCI Asset Sale

A Federal judge has opened the door for MCI Communications to sell the bulk of its Internet businesses this week to the highest bidder despite a court challenge, a key move to help MCI complete its planned merger with Worldcom. U.S. District Court Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson rejected a request from Cable & Wireless, which last month agreed to buy MCI's wholesale Internet business for \$625 million, preventing MCI from offering an expanded deal to any other company for 10 days. Antitrust regulators in the United States and Europe have held up the \$37 billion MCI-WorldCom deal because of fears the merged company would have too much control of the Internet. MCI's sale of its wholesale Internet business to Cable & Wireless was intended to mollify those concerns, but regulators subsequently said the divestiture was inadequate and MCI is now preparing to divest more Internet services. Cable & Wireless filed suit against MCI Wednesday after learning of MCI's plan to offer a revised package of assets, including those it bought to other bidders. Cable & Wireless charged that, under the original sales agreement, MCI was obligated to first offer it a chance to buy any revised package. But during a 40-minute hearing, Judge Jackson repeatedly asked Cable & Wireless attorney Charles Lettow why MCI could not invoke a simple \$25 million termination provision in the earlier sales contract.

"Why could not MCI decide the transaction is void and pay the \$25 million?" Jackson asked. "It seems that's an option open to them." Lettow said that other provisions of the contract required MCI to first negotiate in "good faith" with Cable & Wireless. Asked for evidence that MCI would not negotiate in good faith, Lettow said "because they told us they wouldn't."

MCI attorney Phillip Cohan told the judge that regulators have not disclosed specifically what assets needed to be divested yet. If MCI was ordered to negotiate a revised sale with Cable & Wireless it would be "toward an objective that is totally unknown." In the original deal with Cable & Wireless, MCI sold its Internet backbone service which provides Internet transmission facilities to other Internet service providers. But MCI did not divest its retail Internet services that provide net access to corporate and residential customers. People familiar with MCI's plans have said MCI now planned to divest the retail services as well. But

WorldCom is not expected to put its fast-growing UUNet unit on the block. Companies such as British Telecommunications, IXC Communications and PSINet Inc. are seen as interested buyers of the retail assets, analysts said.

Disney Acquires 43% Stake In Infoseek

The Walt Disney Co. today said it bought a 43 percent stake in Infoseek Corp. in exchange for Disney's Starwave Corp. and \$70 million in cash. Disney also gets warrants that could give it a majority stake in Infoseek over time. Infoseek was up 1 3/8 to 35 7/8 after pulling back from an early 15 percent gain, and Disney slipped 3/4 to 113 9/16. Under the agreement, Disney receives 25.8 million shares of Infoseek and a minority position on the board of directors. Disney also agreed to supply \$165 million in promotional support for Infoseek.

The Infoseek shares will be swapped for Disney's stake in Starwave. The companies didn't say what Starwave was worth. The new company, which combines Disney's marketing with Starwave properties such as ABCnews.com and ESPN.com, will operate under the Infoseek Internet Portal Service name. The deal is likely to boost traffic for both ABCnews.com and ESPN.com. In a statement, Disney Chief Executive Officer Michael Eisner said the deal "provides an ideal partnership for the creation of a new Internet portal service."

Shares of Infoseek have spiked in recent days as rumors swirled that the company would team up with a major media player. Portals have been prime targets for established media players, which are buying their way onto the Web. On Wednesday, shares of America Online Inc. gained 6 percent after the company rebuffed a takeover attempt from ATT Excite Inc. gained 2 3/8 to 78 1/2, or 3 percent; and Yahoo! Inc. added 3 13/16 to 134 7/16, a 52-week high. The Walt Disney Co. can be reached at www.disney.com Infoseek can be reached at www.infoseek.com

AOL Says It Will Remain Independent

Top executives at America Online, the largest U.S. computer online service provider, has informed its employees it is committed to remaining independent and is not merging with AT&T, published reports said today. According to the New York Times and Wall Street Journal, AOL's president, Stephen Case, and president, Robert Pittman, sent an e-mail message to its workers explaining the company was not planning a merger.

We are committed to remaining an independent company, as that is the best course for our "customers, shareholders and employees," Case and Pittman said in the e-mail message, according to the Times. The message from Case and Pittman was in response to an article in London's Financial Times newspaper saying the two sides discussed a possible merger, and that AOL rebuffed AT&T's offer.

However, the e-mail message went on to say, according to the Times and Journal, that AOL continues to be eager to establish alliances with a wide range of telecommunications, media and technology companies." Both papers, citing people familiar with the situation, said the two companies had been talking for some time and that AT&T was eager to buy AOL and use it to sell long-distance telephone service. According to the Journal, AT&T was willing to hand over its own lagging rival on-line service, WorldNet, to AOL in exchange for the right to become a major provider of telecommunication services to AOL.

Digital Wins Ruling In Product Liability Lawsuit

A jury has found Digital Equipment not liable for injuries caused by use of its keyboards, the computer maker said. The jury ruled in Digital's favor in the lawsuit, Gonzalez vs. Digital Equipment, brought on behalf of nine plaintiffs in U.S. District Court in the New York City borough of Brooklyn. Digital said the decision may help bring an end to growing litigation over computer keyboards, which some say cause repetitive strain injury, or RSI. The nine plaintiffs blamed their upper extremity conditions on using Digital keyboards. Digital, which is based in Maynard, Mass., and was recently acquired by personal computer maker Compaq Computer, said the jury returned verdicts in Digital's favor against all the plaintiffs.

U.S. Software Firms Lost Billions To Pirates In 1997

The U.S. software industry lost \$11.4 billion of revenue worldwide last year due to illegal copying of programs such as Microsoft's Excel and Adobe Systems' Illustrator, according to a study by two industry groups. The study, by the Business Software Alliance and the Software Publishers Association, found that almost half of all newly installed business programs were pirated. In the United States, the survey found 27 percent of software was pirated, adding up to an estimated \$2.8 billion in lost revenue. In China, 96 percent of software was pirated, with lost revenue totaling \$1.4 billion. The revenue loss estimate assumed that all people who illegally copied software would otherwise have purchased the same product, an assumption some economists dispute.

Microsoft Targeted As Spam Distributor

In a statement that was widely circulated earlier this year, Microsoft CEO Bill Gates called spam a "maddening waste of time." Apparently they don't feel the same way at the Microsoft Network. The online service was targeted by anti-spam activists as one of the worst enablers of junk e-mail. As a result, millions of furious MSN customers have found their emails lost in cyberspace-innocent casualties of a powerful and far-reaching spam boycott.

On Tuesday evening, following months of warnings and communications, MSN was placed on Paul Vixie's notorious Realtime Blackhole List. The List is a mass Internet boycott tool aimed at Internet service providers and other companies that ignore repeated requests from Vixie's team to make their servers more resistant to spam. Vixie, a California consultant and engineer, runs the RBL with a team of volunteers, as part of the Mail Abuse Prevention System (MAPS). The project is voluntarily supported by thousands of Internet service providers throughout the world to lessen the flood of spam across their networks and simultaneously pressure those companies that tolerate spam into doing something about it. This mainly involves closing any "open relays" on email servers that spammers can use to launch their floods of bulk email. The boycott effectively makes a given range of network addresses "invisible," and e-mail sent to a such addresses is bounced back to the sender with a message explaining the purpose of the black hole. The MAPS team first contacted MSN Jan. 12 to alert them to what they said were spam floods being launched from their unsecured mail servers. After little was done, the following month, one of MSN's Internet address "blocks" was added to the RBL as a warning. But the relays were still not closed, and this week, following a breakdown in communications, Vixie felt he had to place all of MSN's mail servers in the black hole.

On Thursday, following three-and-a-half days in email limbo, MSN was removed from the list, after Vixie received assurances that Microsoft mail servers would be secured to prevent their outside use by spammers. "MSN has been very good about not allowing its own customers to send out spam and should be applauded for that," said Vixie. "The problem has been outside third parties who use MSN's mail servers to relay spam."

MSN has refused to comment on the issue, despite repeated requests from Wired News. As of May 1997, the last time such figures were available, MSN had 2.3 million members. According to Vixie, MSN has not taken responsibility for allowing so much spam to be launched off their systems. Once added to the black hole list -- and doubtlessly drowning in customer complaints -- Microsoft's first response was to move the mail relays to different network addresses in an effort to evade the blockage. "We wouldn't have noticed," said Vixie, "but we started getting spammed from the new addresses." Next, MSN informed its customers that MAPS was responsible for the outage, without mentioning that the problem related to spam on their systems. "I have visited the MAPS Web site that the message referred you to and regret to inform you that we can do nothing from MSN as far as configuration settings to your system to stop them from blocking the mail," read an e-mail sent to one MSN customer from MSN member support.

"I apologize for the trouble, but if anyone can stop this domain from blocking users mail transport it is the domain itself. Hope this helps explain things," the MSN support mail concluded. Once forwarded the text of this form letter, Vixie said he was only further bolstered in his cause. "Until I saw the above text, I was worried that maybe we shouldn't have black-holed MSN," Vixie wrote in a post to the North American Network Operators Group mailing list.

"Whenever we have to black-hole something large, we get mail from RBL subscribers asking 'Are you crazy?' or something similar. I hate to shake the tree too hard all at once-the wrong things fall out. But when I saw what Microsoft was telling their customers, it became clear to me that this was a battle we could not avoid," he wrote. Dave Rand, a MAPS administrator, said that MSN management contacted him to discuss the situation last Thursday. With assurances that MSN servers would be adjusted to prevent their use by spammers, the Internet service provider came off the service five minutes later, Rand said.

Vixie said that the actual technical adjustments have not yet been made, but that MSN management had told MAPS when to expect it to be done, "and so we've removed them from the RBL until at least that time," he said. Vixie added that MAPS is receiving about two complaints per minute from the backlog of msn.com customers who are only now finding bounced mail in their email boxes. "Hopefully it'll level off soon," he said. MSN is the largest ISP to be added to the black hole list since December 1997, when Vixie and the MAPS team placed Netcom on the real-time black hole list for a month. They were removed after the company agreed to secure its servers against abuse by spammers.

Junk E-Mail Compromise Sought

Several factions in the dispute over junk e-mail lent support Wednesday to a compromise bill that would give consumers the right to insist their names be removed from mass marketers' lists. At a hearing of the Senate Commerce subcommittee on communications, representatives of America Online and the Direct Marketing Association endorsed the proposal, and a Federal Trade Commission member said the bill struck a fair balance.

But one group of Internet activists remains unhappy. The Coalition Against Unsolicited Commercial E-mail told the subcommittee that the bill would legitimize junk e-mail, also known as "spam." The group favors an all-out ban. The Senate has already passed a version of the proposal sponsored by Sens. Robert Torricelli, D-N.J., and Frank Murkowski, R-Alaska. This hearing on junk e-mail was scheduled before their proposal was attached to a telecommunications bill that sailed through the Senate. It would require senders of unsolicited e-mail to identify themselves, provide a valid return e-mail address and inform recipients they can stop any future mailings by replying with the word "remove." The Federal Trade Commission would enforce the system with fines. Murkowski and Torricelli acknowledged that some believe their proposal does not go far enough. But they said a ban would go too far.

"The government should simply not dictate, in my opinion, what a consumer sees in his or her e-mail box," Murkowski said. "We have been down that road before with the Communications Decency Act. The Supreme Court by unanimous vote has made it very, very clear what it thinks of sweeping bans on Internet material." Torricelli said that he ordinarily would oppose even modest government regulation of the Internet but that spamming has become more than an inconvenience. Last March, he said, spammers crashed Pacific Bell's network, cutting telephone service for 24 hours. Sheila Anthony, a member of the Federal Trade Commission, told the subcommittee that junk e-mail is a serious federal issue because it undermines consumer confidence in online commerce.

"Spam has become the fraud artist's calling card on the Internet," she said. In response to a question, Anthony said she thought the bill struck a fair balance. Randall Boe, associate general counsel of America Online, said his company uses sophisticated filters to detect and block mass e-mail. The company has also brought court cases against more than 20 junk e-mailers in the last nine months. But savvy spammers have employed a variety of techniques to thwart filters, such as disguising a junk e-mail's originating address. Boe said America Online would like to see the government step in "to a limited extent." The dissenting view came from Ray Everett-Church, a Washington lawyer and co-founder of the Coalition Against Unsolicited Commercial E-mail. He said the Murkowski-Torricelli proposal "would allow marketers to indiscriminately send massive volumes of e-mail with no recourse for the victim other than begging to be taken off the list."

Web's Banner Days Behind It?

Web advertising just isn't clicking the way it used to. Online ads increasingly are getting the cold shoulder from Web viewers, who now click on typical banner ads about half as often as they did 18 months ago. That undercuts the economics of a medium once cast as a paradise for direct marketers. When it comes to Web advertising, Carol Johnston has tried a little bit of everything. Johnston, vice president of marketing at Simon for delivering paying customers to advertisers or branding advertising," Griffing said. "If nothing else, they may learn something from it."

Whatever path publishers decide to take, some will not recover from the newest advertising industry twists that threaten the viability of the online publishing business, said Jim Nail, senior analyst at Forrester Research Inc. "It's going to delay the day that publishers start making money," he said.

Some publishers - such as Mark Evans, advertising sales manager at Netscape Communications Corp. - contend that the threats of plunging click-through rates and burgeoning ad space availability are stoked in part by advertising networks and brokers seeking to increase confusion in the marketplace - and thereby pump up demand among buyers for help in the seemingly chaotic business of buying World Wide Web advertising. There are some successes Evans views the splintering of advertising inventory into premium and low-end tiers as part of the natural evolution of the industry. "This phenomenon is not unique to the Internet," he said. "That's why you have outlet stores." But for every report of plunging click-through rates, publishers can point to online marketing successes. Navigation hub Lycos Inc., for instance, claims click-through rates of 4.6 percent throughout its whole site with selected advertisers - such as Alamo Rent A Car Inc. and Toys.com - garnering click-through rates exceeding 30 percent, said Jan Horsfall, vice president of marketing at Lycos.

Likewise, News America Digital Publishing garners click-through rates in excess of 8 percent for video ads incorporated into TV grids offered at its www.tvgen.com site. Part of the solution may lie in developing more eye-catching banner ads capable of drawing viewers' attention. Better ads needed "Advertising on today's Web needs to be compelling enough to take me away from really good content," said David Madden, executive vice president of sales at News America Digital Publishing. "It has to use richer media within the ads themselves or deliver messages that are better targeted to specific audiences."

Achieving either objective hardly has been cost-effective for publishers to date. Sophisticated databases that can target users based on registration information submitted to a site can cost tens of thousands of dollars to implement. Similarly, placing multimedia ads can be a hit-and-miss proposition because only a fraction of commercial sites typically have the capability to carry a broad range of multimedia ads. One other possible solution is the development of more interactive banner ads, which allow users to complete tasks within the banner window at the top of their screen without clicking away from the content site they are visiting. Narrative Communications Corp. with its Enliven service, for instance, has taken the lead in developing technology that allows viewers to register for more information from an advertiser or place a product order within the banner window itself.

"The banner doesn't die," Modem Media Poppe Tyson's Griffing said. "But the most compelling messages delivered online will offer interactivity at the banner level."

Not Much Interest in Windows 98

Overall shipments will be strong for Microsoft Corp.'s revamped Windows 98 operating system, but there's only "modest to low" interest in upgrading existing computers, a report by the research company Dataquest said today. "For a lot of people, the system works just fine now," said Chris Le Tocq, a Dataquest director and principal analyst for personal computing software. Since many of its features already are available, Windows 98 itself is not sufficient reason for many users - and most businesses - to upgrade, he said. Le Tocq said Microsoft will increase its lock on personal computer operating systems, from a 91 percent share of the market in 1997 to an estimated 95 percent at the end of 1999. But he said it will do so by selling Windows 98 on new machines and through growing sales of Windows NT, the beefier version of the operating system aimed at companies and organizations. Some new computers equipped with

Windows 98 went on sale Monday, and the software is to begin retail sales June 25. Microsoft has been saying lately that Windows 98 is targeted at home and individual users, while businesses should consider NT. Dataquest estimates Windows 98 will ship 56.7 million units in 1998, 58 percent of the total operating system market of 110 million units worldwide.

Microsoft estimates 40 million copies of Windows 95 were shipped in the 12 months following its release. But computers now cost only a fraction of what they did then, and far more people have them. The report said Dataquest analysts "anticipate modest to low interest in Windows 98 upgrades" with upgrade shipments totaling just 5.5 million units - less than 10 percent of the Windows 98 total. Most of those upgrades, about 85 percent, will be sold retail to individuals and small businesses, Le Tocq estimated.

Microsoft's promotion of Windows 98 has been far more subdued than its \$30 million hype for Windows 95, which included a circus show at the company's headquarters here featuring talk show host Jay Leno when the program was released in August 1995. But Windows 95 was virtually an all-new product, while Windows 98 is a minor upgrade and consolidation of existing features, Le Tocq said. The retail upgrade cost of Windows 98 will be around \$90 a copy.

"It is not a necessary item," Le Tocq said. Le Tocq noted that with computer prices plummeting, many businesses are finding "the investment in a Windows NT system begins to look substantially similar to the investment in a Windows 98 system." In addition, Microsoft plans a major reworking of Windows NT next year, and many companies will simply wait until then, he said.

Dataquest forecasts that just under 14 million units of NT will be shipped this year. Windows 95 shipments are pegged at 31.3 million with 1.5 million shipments of its predecessor, Windows 3.1. All other operating systems globally will total 7.2 million shipments. In 1999, Windows 98 will ship 95.5 million units, Windows 3.1 will account for 536,000, and NT 25.8 million units. No Windows 95 programs will be shipped and all other operating systems will total 6.9 million - just 5.4 percent of the overall market of 128.9 million units.

From 1998 to 1999, NT's share of the total market will grow from 12.6 percent to 22.4 percent, Dataquest estimates. Le Tocq called Windows 98 "the last hurrah for the current architecture" of Windows, since the next expected version, Windows 2000, will be based on NT's structure.

Editor Note: One has to wonder whether or not Dataquest is biased!! So far, every major issue concerning Microsoft that they've come forward on has been either negative or dismal. Windows 98 is receiving high accolades on a unilateral basis. It has been this reporter's experience that no matter where we've gone to ask questions relative to Win98 and upgrading... the response has been overwhelmingly positive. Ranging from "when" to "where can I get it?"

Where in heaven's name do... Le Tocq, Dataquest and its "analysts" come up with these wild and wooly estimates (wild guesses)? I have no idea but perhaps they ought to change the brand of Ouija Boards they are using. Their current results are from hunger.

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EDUPAGE STR Focus Keeping the users informed

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HOUSE BILL CRACKS DOWN ON ONLINE PEDOPHILE ACTIVITY

The House of Representatives unanimously approved legislation that aims to get tough with anyone who knowingly transmits obscene materials over the Internet to a minor. It also prohibits "contacting" a minor through an online service, and mandates a three-year minimum prison sentence for engaging in sexual activity with a minor, using a computer. "Individuals who seek children to sexually exploit and victimize them are also a mouse click away," says Rep. Bill McCollum (R-Fla.), who worked with the Justice Dept. to draft the bill. "Cyberpredators often cruise the Internet in search of lonely, curious or trusting young people. Sex offenders who prey on children no longer need to hang out in parks or malls or school yards." The bill will now go to the Senate for consideration. (New York Times 12 Jun 98)

NEXTWAVE SUES FCC OVER WIRELESS LICENSES

NextWave Personal Communications Inc., which won 63 "C block" wireless communications licenses in a May 1996 auction, says it can't pay the \$4.2 billion it owes the government, and instead has filed Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceedings and sued the FCC for \$3 billion. In its lawsuit, NextWave says the FCC reduced the value of its licenses by not making them available for almost a year, and by holding additional auctions in the interim. The licenses sold in the "D," "E" and "F" blocks went for considerably less money than the C block bids, making it more difficult for C block winners like NextWave to raise money to pay for them. FCC Chairman William Kennard calls NextWave's bankruptcy filing "unfortunate," saying it "underscores again the urgent need for Congress to make clear that the licenses to use the public's airwaves are public assets, not private property that can be tied up in bankruptcy." (Wall Street Journal 12 Jun 98)

NAVY AND AOL SETTLE IN ONLINE PRIVACY SUIT

The U.S. Navy and America Online have reached separate settlements with an 18-year Navy veteran who charged his right to privacy was violated when AOL confirmed to a Navy investigator that Timothy McVeigh (no relation to the convicted Oklahoma bombing McVeigh) had posted a message on AOL in which he described himself as gay. Under the terms of the Navy's settlement, McVeigh will retire from the military with full benefits and money to pay for legal fees. In its settlement with McVeigh, AOL apologized for violating his privacy. (Reuters 12 Jun 98)

IN SEARCH OF HIGH-TECH WORKERS...

More than 75% of U.S. software executives say they expect to hire more workers this year, according to the 1998 Software Business Practice Survey, sponsored by Price Waterhouse, Silicon Valley East and the

Massachusetts Software Council. The big question is, where will those workers come from? Recruitment worries have risen from No. 14 on a list of important items compiled in 1996, to a tie for No. 1 this year. "The competition for software talent is a major concern for the industry," says the national director of Price Waterhouse's Software Services Group. (Information Week 8 Jun 98)

MOTOROLA, IBM END POWERPC ALLIANCE

Motorola is assuming sole control of the PowerPC chip design center in Austin, Texas, which previously had been operated as a joint venture between Motorola and IBM. The facility now will be wholly owned by Motorola, which is the principal designer and promoter of the PowerPC chip. IBM says it will continue to develop PowerPC chips for its own servers and other applications. (Investor's Business Daily 12 Jun 98)

COMPAQ TO CUT 2,000 JOBS

Compaq Computer, as part of its plans to acquire Digital Equipment Corp., plans to trim 2,000 jobs from its 31,500-employee workforce, in addition to the 15,000 Digital workers it plans to let go following the merger. Compaq is also absorbing Tandem Computers, which it bought for \$3 billion last year, and is warning investors that it faces costs for laying off workers and other expenses of combining operations with Digital. The companies have so far declined to say where the job cuts will be made. (USA Today 12 Jun 98)

INTEL TO DELIVER DIGITAL MUSIC TO PCs

Intel Corp. is expanding its commitment to online music in a deal inked last week with Launch, a music-oriented CD-ROM subscription service. The new arrangement capitalizes on Intel's digital broadcast technology to expand on Launch's service with satellite-delivered content, including music performances and interviews with popular artists. "You are able to get the type of musical content (you want) from your PC when you want it," says Intel's director of music marketing. Launch and Intel plan to test their service this fall, with a commercial debut slated for early 1999. (Broadcasting & Cable 8 Jun 98)

THE BACKBONE'S CONNECTED TO THE...

Up until now, the arrangements between Internet backbone providers to interconnect their networks have been fairly informal, and did not involve any exchange of money, says Hal Varian, dean of the School of Information Management and Systems at the University of California, Berkeley. The proposed merger between WorldCom and MCI has made other backbone providers wary, however, because they fear that the market clout exercised by the combined companies could allow the new entity to refuse to interconnect with other providers, or do so only on an "extortionate" basis. "The Justice Department and the Federal Communications Commission can help the business model for interconnection evolve by requiring WorldCom/MCI (and other backbone providers) to agree to the principle of 'fair, reasonable and nondiscriminatory' terms for interconnection with other carriers," says Varian. "This should not mean settlement-free terms; monetary transfers may prove necessary to make interconnection agreements work. The emphasis should be on nondiscriminatory. Interconnection contracts may differ from carrier to carrier, but the contract used by a given carrier should be the same for all backbone providers with which it exchanges traffic. Thus backbone providers could not exploit their market power to the detriment of the

industry or of new entrants." (Wall Street Journal 8 Jun 98)

JUSTICE SCRUTINIZES MICROSOFT'S HAND-HELD PC TACTICS

The Justice Department is investigating whether Microsoft is using its overwhelming market share in desktop operating system software to advance its position in the hand-held PC market. The company is offering a coupon for a free copy of Windows 98 to customers who buy a Palm PC before June 30. "They're constantly using their existing power as a leverage tool to create a new market" in other products, says a former Justice lawyer at the Brookings Institution. "This is just a good promotion that offers incentives for people interested in getting a palm-sized computer to get another great product," says a Microsoft spokesman. (USA Today 15 Jun 98)

NORTEL BUYS BAY NETWORKS

Canadian firm Northern Telecom is buying No. 3 computer networking equipment maker Bay Networks for about \$7.1 billion. Bay Networks had been struggling for several years, and analysts viewed the acquisition as inevitable. "Bay was running out of gas," says one. "This merger spells trouble ahead for Cisco," says an analyst with Dataquest Inc. "And it will be a wake-up call for (voice equipment makers) like Siemens, Alcatel and Ericsson. With this acquisition, Nortel has an advantage over them." (Investor's Business Daily 16 Jun 98)

FTC COMMISSIONER TARGETS INTERNET PRIVACY

Federal Trade Commissioner Mozelle Thompson says Internet Web sites need to change the way they solicit information from children: "At the very least, requiring parental permission before information is gathered and used may be enough of a screening process for a lot of kids. Parents talk to their kids about what stores they can go into in the mall, and talk to them about what strangers they can talk to. The only thing we're saying here is that, before kids are asked for information about themselves and their families, parents should be consulted so they can make the decision... The companies that are the most savvy see the importance of security and privacy for their potential customers." (Los Angeles Times 15 Jun 98)

MICROSOFT AND COMPAQ INVEST IN ROAD RUNNER

Microsoft and Compaq will each invest \$212.5 million for 10% stakes in Road Runner, which is a high-speed cable-modem joint venture of three entities: Time Warner, Time Warner/Advance-Newhouse, and the Mediaone Group. Industry analyst Michael Harris says, "The bottom line for both of these companies is it is in their best interest to accelerate the arrival of high-bandwidth services to customers. Given the glacial pace at which the telcos move, they're probably better off pushing the cable companies. But they are really agnostic; they just want more bandwidth to the home no matter how it gets there." (New York Times 16 Jun 98)

MCI IS WILLING TO SELL OFF MORE OF ITS INTERNET BUSINESS

In hopes of persuading Justice Department and European Union regulators that its proposed acquisition by WorldCom will not allow the merged company to dominate the Internet industry, MCI is ready to offer to sell off additional components of its Internet business. It had already announced an agreement to sell part of its business to Cable and Wireless, but the deal failed to clear the regulatory hurdles. Regulators

would no doubt approve the merger if WorldCom were to sell its UUNet operation, but WorldCom has no interest in doing that. (New York times 16 Jun 98)

XEROX TARGETS INK JET PRINTER MARKET

Xerox has developed a new line of ink jet printers intended to compete directly against products from Hewlett Packard, which currently has more than half U.S. market share in ink jet printers. Xerox's new color ink jet printer will retail for about \$199 and print up to 2.5 pages a minute. (Techweb 16 Jun 98)

UPDATE ON RSI LAWSUIT AGAINST DIGITAL

Jury deliberations are beginning in a retrial of a lawsuit filed against Digital Equipment Corporation by nine individuals who claimed that their use of computer keyboards manufactured by Digital caused them to suffer repetitive stress injuries (RSI) such as carpal tunnel syndrome. An earlier jury had awarded the plaintiffs a \$5.3 million verdict, but it was overturned and sent back to the lower court for retrial. (News.com 16 Jun 98)

AOL WANTS TO BE ALONE

America Online says it is not interested in pursuing discussions focused on an acquisition of AOL by long-distance company AT&T, and America Online president Robert W. Pittman has told his employees: "We continue to be eager to establish alliances with a wide range of telecommunications, media and technology companies." (New York Times 18 Jun 98)

QWEST SIDES WITH BELLS IN TWO LAW SUITS

Long-distance carrier Qwest Communications filed motions in support of Bell operating companies U S West and Ameritech in lawsuits against them brought by MCI, AT&T and other long-distance carriers claiming that marketing agreements between the Bells and Qwest violate the 1996 Telecommunications Act. The Act prohibits Bell from selling long-distance services until they have opened their own local markets to rivals. However, Qwest, U S West and Ameritech argue that the Act doesn't specifically prohibit the Bells from marketing the services of an unaffiliated long-distance carrier such as Qwest. (Wall Street Journal 18 Jun 98)

WIN 98 GROWTH FOCUSED ON NEW SYSTEMS, NOT UPGRADES

The Dataquest research company says that Microsoft will increase its share of personal computer operating systems from 91% in 1997 to an estimated 95% in 1999, by selling Windows 98 on new machines and through sales of Windows NT. There has been only "modest to low" interest shown either by individuals or businesses in upgrading existing systems with Windows 98 software. (USA Today 17 Jun 98)

TIME IS RUNNING OUT FOR ENCRYPTION LEGISLATION

With lawmakers planning to adjourn Oct. 5 so they can return to their home districts to campaign, prospects for the passage of several technology-related bills are dimming. While legislation to conform U.S. laws to the World Intellectual Property Organization treaty and a bill to impose a moratorium on Internet taxes may still pass before recess, other

bills addressing encryption export rules likely won't be addressed. "There is a lot of discussion internally within the administration," says a spokeswoman for the Information Technology Industry Council of the pending encryption legislation. The Clinton Administration has been holding talks with software CEOs to try to hammer out a compromise on export controls over strong encryption software products. (TechWeb 18 Jun 98)

CORPORATE UNIVERSITIES ARE BIG BUSINESS

Ten years ago there were about 400 corporate universities -- comprehensive training institutions operated by corporations -- and that number has now grown to 1,600. Several of them, such as the Arthur D. Little School in Boston, have formal degree-granting powers, and many have forged alliances with nearby colleges and universities to enable students taking their courses to receive credits that count toward external degrees. But now that cozy relationship is crumbling, as corporate universities increasingly are under pressure from their companies to become self-supporting. That puts the corporate schools in direct competition with conventional universities in the fund-raising arena. A recent survey of 100 corporate universities showed that 10% planned to be self-funded by 2000. "As the funding model changes to be more self-funded, these universities are going to brand what they are doing and use their significant resources to go to the external market. At that point they are a significant threat," says a spokeswoman at Corporate University Xchange. (Financial Times 18 Jun 98)

DIGITAL WINS PRODUCT LIABILITY SUIT

A New York jury has found Digital Equipment not liable for the repetitive stress injuries suffered by nine workers who claimed Digital keyboards caused their problems. Digital said that although the workers did have medical problems, they were attributable to a host of other health issues and complications. "A keyboard is a tool. It is not more dangerous than a bricklayer's trowel, a piano, or even a pen," said the general counsel and senior VP at Compaq, which acquired Digital last week. "We applaud the jurors' wisdom and common sense." Digital hopes this victory will discourage more keyboard liability lawsuits. "Judges and juries have rejected keyboard product liability claims 30 out of 31 times," says Digital's trial counsel. "It would be unfortunate if the courts were forced to spend valuable time hearing more cases that obviously have no merit." (Reuters 17 Jun 98)

INTERNET TELEPHONY GAINING MARKET SHARE

Internet-based phone services are poised to overtake conventional phone traffic by the year 2000, according to British consulting firm Analysys. The report predicts that pricing of online and conventional phone networks will converge within the next three to five years. (Investor's Business Daily 17 Jun 98)

KIDS' SOFTWARE IS CURSED BY A BUG

An educational software program has exhibited an unusual glitch -- under certain circumstances it can spew forth language that would make a sailor blush. "Secret Writer's Society," a product of Matsushita's Panasonic Interactive Media, is a writing program for children that, among other things, recites their compositions back to them in a computer-generated voice. The problem is, there's a bug in the filter that's supposed to prevent the text-to-speech function from reciting foul

language, and instead of suppressing those words, it delves into the archives of prohibited words to string together streams of obscenities that go "way beyond George Carlin's seven banned words," as one parent who tested the program says. A Matsushita marketing manager says she has heard of only two instances of the problem, both using a Macintosh and both times, when a lot of memory was in use. But the editor-in-chief of SuperKids, which reviews educational software on the Web, says that he was able to activate the glitch simply by writing a passage longer than just a few sentences and double-clicking the mouse instead of single-clicking. "It's got a very expressive vocabulary," he notes. (Wall Street Journal 17 Jun 98)

FBI WEB SITE THE PLACE TO LOOK FOR ODDITIES

On the FBI's site at <http://www.fbi.gov> you can browse through 16,000 pages of FBI files on old cases that are most frequently requested by citizens under the Freedom of Information Act, and a new batch was posted this month. The files cover UFO sightings, reports on gangsters, and other sensational material normally reserved for tabloid publications. (AP 17 Jun 98)

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New Windows 98 Reference Learning Tools Hits Bookstores, Hot Off the Microsoft Press

Books and CD-ROMs appropriate for experts, beginners, everyone in between!

Redmond, WA

People who use computers will likely want to add these new offerings to their summer reading lists. Microsoft Press recently released a full line of learning and reference products for the new Microsoft Windows 98 operating system. The books and CD-based multimedia tools will help people of all computing skill levels learn how to make the most of the operating system's new features.

Microsoft designed Windows 98_due to be released on June 25_to work better and play better, and millions of people want to find out how. "With the Windows 98 launch just a few weeks away, millions of customers have been anxiously awaiting these learning and reference materials," said Jim Brown, general manager and publisher of Microsoft Press. "Microsoft-approved Windows 95 books and reference titles were extremely popular. Judging by the numerous requests Microsoft Press has been receiving daily for Windows 98 materials, interest in these products will be equally strong."

To fill that need, Microsoft Press has published several new products, each designed with a different audience in mind. The books and multimedia tools can help everyone from an experienced power user to a first-time computer owner learn to use Windows 98 like a pro.

The Microsoft Windows 98 Resource Kit_for systems administrators and

other IT professionals_consists of a book and CD-ROM with tools, utilities and accessory software. The kit describes configuration details such as the FAT32 file system, point-to-point tunneling protocol (PPTP) and the IEEE1394 bus for PC-based control of VCRs, stereos and other electronic devices.

"We're excited about the Windows 98 Resource Kit and the full line of how-to guides from Microsoft Press," said Carla Bayha, computer book buyer at Borders Books and Music. "Our customers look for and expect the high level of technical accuracy and learning flexibility built right into their books." No doubt that's just what they'll find with the rest of the Windows 98 selections as well.

The Microsoft Windows 98 Starts Here CD will be available on June 20. It actually shows people the new operating system features in action. The CD can help people who are new to computers learn how to make the most of Windows 98. Running Microsoft Windows 98 is an 800-page manual including in-depth information and tips from software experts. The guide is the most comprehensive reference book for Windows 98, and its companion CD contains a fully searchable electronic version of the manual. And finally, the Microsoft Windows 98 at a Glance book includes screen shots with numbered instructions that show users how to accomplish specific tasks, step by step.

With all the enhancements to Windows 98, people will surely make good use of these reference materials.

The Windows 98 operating system improves overall system performance, makes computing easier, includes new Internet functions and entertainment features and supports the latest hardware and peripheral devices.

Windows 98 speeds up performance, so programs will load faster. The operating system also uses hard-drive space more efficiently, allowing for an average of 28 percent more hard-drive capacity_without compressing files. To make everyday computing tasks easier, Windows 98 includes new desktop navigation options, including a single-click program launch; forward and back buttons, much like those found on a Web browser; and a Start Menu designed for simpler customization.

New Internet features in Windows 98 include Web-browsing capabilities throughout the product and Internet tools such as Microsoft Outlook Express, an intuitive e-mail package. Microsoft also integrated the NetMeeting 2.1 conferencing application into Windows 98 for easy Web-based video conferences_an especially useful feature for people who telecommute. And new HTML-based Help includes troubleshooting tools and step-by-step, how-to information.

So whether you use your computer to play games or manage your home-based business, you can take your pick of tools that will help you make it run that much better.

Montezuma's Revenge
Utopia Technologies, Inc.
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Email: info@utopiatech.com

COMPANY OVERVIEW

UTOPIA TECHNOLOGIES, INC. ("the Company" and "Utopia") is a privately

owned New Jersey corporation. Utopia has its licensing and business management office in Plano, Texas (telephone 972-517-3377; Fax 972-517-1616) and its creative development and programming offices located in Hoboken, New Jersey. The Company's e-mail address is info@utopiatech.com and its World Wide Web address is <http://www.utopiatech.com> . Utopia is engaged in the development of software technology and content for computer-based entertainment. To date, the Company has achieved a high degree of success in the development and licensing of coin-operated games for public locations. In addition to this Utopia has focused its efforts for the past three and a half years creating its UVision realtime 3D graphics technology and a home PC-based computer game. The Company has developed cutting edge, multi-purpose software technology, called UVision, which allows realtime 3D graphics with a range of features, graphic realism and efficiency that is truly state of the art.

The UVision engine has wide application in the entertainment and edutainment software markets.

Corporate Mission

The two principals of Utopia made a commitment to developing state of the art realtime 3D graphics technology in December 1994. The primary focus of the development effort was in creating a PC-based computer game to be called "Montezuma's Return!" a sequel to a popular title called "Montezuma's Revenge," which had been developed by Mr. Jaeger in 1984 and which still has a strong following and to this day is considered a classic among gamers. Within the past year, the advent of personal computers with much greater processing capacity and multi-media capabilities opened up many new additional applications for the UVision technology outside the game arena. In this new environment, the Company has formulated the following as its corporate mission:

TO BE A MARKET LEADER IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF INNOVATIVE REALTIME 3D GRAPHICS TECHNOLOGY FOR CROSS-PLATFORM, MULTI-PURPOSE APPLICATIONS IN THE EDUTAINMENT AND ENTERTAINMENT FIELDS.

In the arena of video games, this mission mandates that the company focus heavily on developing exciting realtime 3D games for consoles.

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND OF THE COMPANY

Utopia Technologies, Inc. represents the continuations of activities originally begun in early 1980, by Mr. Robert Jaeger, who taught himself computer programming as a teenager. From the outset, the purpose of Mr. Jaeger's activities was the programming of computer games for the personal computer. Under the corporate name Utopia Software, Inc., Mr. Jaeger developed and personally produced all aspects of a computer game called "Montezuma's Revenge." Mr. Jaeger was discovered by Parker Brothers, the famous maker of board games, at a consumer electronics trade show in Chicago when he was 15 years old. Mr. Jaeger licensed the game to Parker Brothers and the game sold more than 600,000 copies. Montezuma's Revenge was a major hit during the 1984-1985 time frame and remained one of the top ten games on the home video market for two years.

At the end of 1992, Mr. Jaeger joined forces with a childhood friend, Mr. Steve Bergenholtz, and they formed Utopia Technologies, Inc. They turned their attention to the coin-operated video games market, and began work on a new game system called "Countertop Champion", an innovative PC based touchscreen coin-operated game. The company became a vehicle for the two to create and license coin-operated games. In December 1993, the company displayed their countertop game at a trade show; they began shipping the

game in February 1994. The new game device combined more than 48 variations of games including trivia, bowling, pool, blackjack and solitaire in a single PC based unit.

"Countertop Champion" was a pioneering product because the game which featured "true attraction" by means of free demonstration and touchscreen operation was designed to be housed in a countertop cabinet containing all off-the-shelf personal computer components. By using off the shelf PC parts, the game could be brought to market in two months after it was licensed from Utopia, because no special hardware design or manufacturing was required. This was a sharp departure from the industry standard, whereby each game was designed and manufactured using proprietary hardware that cost over \$200,000 to develop at the time.

Countertop Champion was licensed to U.S. Games and was a popular success. The following year, the Company produced Countertop Champion II, also licensed to U.S. Games and also a commercial success. In January 1995, the Company sold all rights to these two games to U.S. Games (which is now part of Leisure Time Technologies.) In December 1994, Utopia began work on the UVision technology, hiring programmers and artists. Again, this approach was innovative. Companies in this industry usually develop a one-game "engine". Utopia focused on developing a powerful multi-purpose, multi-game realtime 3D graphics technology that would have a long life cycle. The Company saw UVision as applying to many different genres of games and delivery format: consoles, coin-op, PC games, and virtual reality.

A critical economic advantage of the UVision technology is that it allows a game to be fully developed in 8 to 12 months, depending upon complexity, rather than the industry norm of 18 to 24 months, hence speeding up the return on development costs and accelerating the time frame for following up a successful game with a sequel. Since beginning work on Montezuma's Return!, changing trends in the PC-based video game's market convinced company management that adapting its efforts to the console format was a necessary strategic move. The Company is now shifting its focus in that direction.

Utopia Technologies
Email: info@utopiatech.com

TECHNOLOGY OVERVIEW

Utopia's UVision realtime 3D engine pushes the state of the art with its advanced lighting capabilities. Many different light types are supported, including point lights, spot lights, and both local and non-local planar lights. Because all lighting is dynamically computed, scripted lighting changes and moving lights sources are possible. Additionally, the 3Dfx version fully supports colored lighting, allowing each light source to have a dynamically changing color.

Features:

- Stunning graphics in 65,000 colors with standard SVGA cards
- Awesome 3Dfx support with multiple color light sources
- Bump Mapping
- Realistic, on-the-fly interaction with true physics
- Full six degrees of freedom
- Full freedom in swim modes
- Realistic 3D sourced sound effects

UVision is a full-featured realtime 3D games engine. In addition to state-of-the-art 3D rendering, UVision features realistic physics and

collision detection.

Engine Features:

- Six degrees of freedom
- Fast Phong shaded, perspective texture mapped polygons
- Multiple, movable cameras and viewpoints
- Multiple, realtime movable light sources (point, spotlight and planar)
- Support for multiple resolutions and color depth up to 65,536 colors
- Supports all VESA framebuffer modes up to 800x600
- Support for graphics accelerator cards

Polygon Features:

- Quick perspective texture mapping
- Animated textures
- Texture turbulence
- Fast Phong shading
- Gouraud shading
- Chrome mapping
- True alpha blending
- Texture opacity (chroma key)
- Facet smoothing on models
- Shading can be globally omitted for additional performance
- Textures can be selectively omitted for additional performance
- Z-buffering
- MIP mapping
- Textures of any resolution
- All features can be combined with a minimal to negligible penalty

Physics:

- Advanced forward dynamics simulation of rigid body motion
- Analytic collision detection and resolution with dynamic environment
- Realtime dynamic constraint solver
- Programmable paths
- Reactive programmable environments
- Surface attributes - sticky, slippery, bouncy, surface forces

Additional Features:

- Single skin mesh with hierarchical jointed skeleton models
- Spline interpolated key frame animation
- Model morphing
- 3D model scaling and deformation effects
- Multiple instancing of objects and hierarchies

UTOPIA'S INNOVATIONS

Montezuma's Return is a first-person realtime 3D action adventure game. It features realtime immersive 3D graphics and fast action gameplay. Unlike most 3D action games, the focus of Montezuma's Return is jumping, puzzle-solving and obstacle maneuvering, rather than destruction. Montezuma's Return will give hours of entertainment for the entire family, and will offer excitement for even the most experienced game player.

A few of the game's highlights include:

being the first realtime 3D first person title not to be a shootfest designed around being played in a true 6 degree of freedom world - where you have to look and move in every direction. the first console style 3D action PC game. first to have realtime 3D arms and legs that are used in the game to solve puzzles, climb on the ropes, jump, swim and for combat.

Realistic, on-the-fly interaction with true physics and other technical features never seen before on a PC such as chrome mapped triangles and Phong shading. appeals to a large audience from Quake players to Myst

players to parent who do not want to buy violent games for their children.

3Dfx ready - will support all 3Dfx cards including Voodoo 2. Dozens of unique animated characters

The retail version will includes over 50 hours of gameplay in addition there is replay value for the player to get a higher score in a faster period of time. Montezuma's Revenge will be included for free.

UTOPIA TECHNOLOGIES, INC.
INDUSTRY AND CONSUMER REACTION

Following are unsolicited comments from the games industry and consumers who have played Montezuma's Return! Utopia has received in many hundreds of emails from players and the gaming community.

A super-designed, engaging and submersive game... shows you what not rushing game design can do for you. . .

Overall, I was very impressed and give the demo 9.5/10.

These folks have done an outstanding job of translating the feel of the Montezuma's Revenge game of years ago. . . an easy recommendation to players of all ages. . .

I haven't played a game that has addicted me so much as Montezuma's Return. The puzzles are just brilliant! You have definitely gotten the perfect balance to make gamers just go back one more time to figure them out.

The graphics contain some of the best 3DFX usage ever and Utopia has an awesome team!!!

You have won my respect as a kick arse games company and I know that many fellow gamers feel exactly the same way. The environment that you have created is one of the most immersive ones that I have ever had the privilege of playing in.

I am totally addicted to the Montezuma's Return demo!

The game looks great...the screen shots got me to d/l the game. My daughter will love this game when it comes out. I play the "original" Montezuma years ago...now I have a daughter who will play, only 26 and I feel damn old!

Much more dynamic, interactive feel than Quake...

Vendor quotes:

"3Dfx is pleased to see games of this caliber designed and optimized for Voodoo Graphics technology," said Andy Keane, VP of Marketing, 3Dfx Interactive. "Montezuma's Return is a fine example of an already excellent game taking advantage of the benefits of 3D acceleration. "

"We've seen Montezuma's Return on our Monster 3D accelerator, and we think gamers will be blown away by the truly awesome gameplay and superior graphics quality," said Savannah Kimball, Developer Relations Manager, Diamond Multimedia.

Contents

1. Introduction
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1.Introduction

Welcome to the CWSApps Weekly Newsletter. Each week we will be delivering a message to your mailbox that is designed to help keep you up to date with the Internet software scene. The newsletter will offer a summary of the latest and greatest Net software updates as well as breaking software news and revisions made to the CWSApps Web site.

As always, any feedback you have on the newsletter will be greatly appreciated. Please send comments (good and bad) to wsapps@internet.com or fill out our comments form at <http://cws.internet.com/comment5.html>

Enjoy...

2.New Features on CWSApps

This week we are releasing the latest and greatest new addition to CWSApps. Our new Upgrade Meter <http://cws.internet.com/upgrade.html> feature helps you determine whether an update is worth downloading or not.

The meter is scaled from 1 to 5, with 1 reflecting a nonessential update and 5 representing an absolute must-have upgrade. The Upgrade Meter will be included with all new reviews and will be accompanied by a synopsis of what's new in the latest update as well as what's new in recent releases. Check out the Upgrade Meter in action and see

why fans like Jim Van Wyck are calling it "the most useful feature on the Web!" and why readers like Christy Benson are saying "yet another reason why CWSApps is by far the best software resource on the Internet!"

We're proud to say that you won't find anything like the Upgrade Meter anywhere else--on or off the Web. Just one more reason why CWSApps is the #1 Software Site on the Net!

3.New Additions to CWSApps

- FTP Voyager v6.0 German and Spanish Editions - a FTP Client
Location: <http://cws.internet.com/32ftp.html#ftpvoyag>

Download: <http://www.ftpvoyager.com/download.htm>
(1.9 MB)
Rating: 5 Stars

- Macromedia Fireworks v1.0 Official Release

- a Web Graphics Tool
Location: <http://cws.internet.com/32webimg.html#fireworks>

Download:

<http://download.macromedia.com/pub/fireworks/english/win/1.0/fireworks-esd.exe>
(9.6 MB)

Rating: 4.5 Stars

- Adobe ImageReady v1.0 Beta 2 - a Web
Graphics Tool

Location: <http://cws.internet.com/32webimg.html#imageready>

Download: <ftp://ftp.adobe.com/pub/adobe/magic/imageready/win/irltry.exe>

(9.9 MB)

Rating: 4 Stars

- MidiGate32 v8.6.0 - an Audio App

Location: <http://cws.internet.com/32audio.html#midigate>

Download: ftp://www.prs.net/midig_32.exe

(0.2 MB)

Rating: 2.5 Stars

-- Servers --

- Bisonware FTP Server v3.5 - a FTP Server

Location: <http://serverwatch.internet.com/ftpservers.html#bisonftp>

Download:

http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/nick_barnes/bisonftp.zip

(0.3 MB)

Rating: 4 Stars

- Cassandra v1.0 Beta 2 - a News Server

Location: <http://serverwatch.internet.com/newsservers.html#cassandra>

Download: <ftp://ftp.atrrium.de/cassandra/casnntpe.exe>

(1.9 MB)

Rating: 4 Stars

----- 4. Updated Apps for the Week -----

Note: The '*' icon identifies apps that have shown significant improvement since their last updates. These apps typically exhibit important new features that make them 'must-have' updates.

- HotDog Professional Webmaster Suite v5.0

Beta 4 - a HTML Editor

Location: <http://cws.internet.com/32html.html#hotdog>

Download: http://download.sausage.com/HD_Installer.EXE

(1.2 MB)

Rating: 5 Stars

* Internet

Explorer v5.0 Developer Preview Release - a Web Browser

Location: <http://cws.internet.com/32www.html#ie5>

Download: <http://www.microsoft.com/sitebuilder/ie/iedownload.htm>

(18.5 MB)

Rating: 5 Stars

- Paint Shop Pro v5.01 - a Graphics App
CWSApps Location: <http://cws.internet.com/32image.html#psp>

Download: <ftp://ftp2.jasc.com/psp501ev.exe>
(7.1 MB)
Rating: 5 Stars
- DiscPlay v4.1 Beta 5 - an Audio CD Player
Location: <http://cws.internet.com/32audio.html#discplay>

Download: <http://www.obvion.com/discplay/dp410pr/>
(2.7 MB)
Rating: 4.5 Stars
- * Zip Explorer Pro v2.54 - a Compression
Utility
Location: <http://cws.internet.com/32comp.html#zippro>

Download: <http://creative.net/~aeco/ZipPro.EXE>
(0.5 MB)
Rating: 4.5 Stars
- CRT v2.2 Beta 6b - a Telnet Client
CWSApps Location: <http://cws.internet.com/32term.html#crt>

Download: <ftp://ftp.vandyke.com/pub/CRT/ntcrt22b6b.exe>
(1.1 MB)
Rating: 4 Stars
- VuePrint Pro v6.0d - a Graphics App
CWSApps Location: <http://cws.internet.com/32image.html#viewpro>

Download: <http://www.hamrick.com/files/vuepro60.exe>
(0.5 MB)
Rating: 4 Stars
- HotJava v1.1.4 - a Web Browser
Location: <http://cws.internet.com/32www.html#hotjava>

Download: <http://www.javasoft.com/hotjava/1.1.4/download.html>
(8.2 MB)
Rating: 3.5 Stars
- * NewsBin v2.21 Official Release - a
Newsreader
CWSApps Location: <http://cws.internet.com/32news.html#nbin>

Download: <http://www.newsbin.com/nb32221.exe>
(0.2 MB)
Rating: 3.5 Stars
- PolyView v3.00.1 - a Graphics Viewer
CWSApps Location: <http://cws.internet.com/32image.html#polyview>

Download: <http://www.polybytes.com/v300/polyv300.exe>
(1.2 MB)
Rating: 3.5 Stars
- TransSoft FTP Control v2.66 - a FTP Client
CWSApps Location: <http://cws.internet.com/32ftp.html#transftp>

Download: <ftp://ftp.transsoft.com/pub/ftpctrl.exe>
(2.1 MB)
Rating: Not Yet Reviewed

- Norton AntiVirus June Virus Definition - a
Virus Scanner Update
Location: <http://cws.internet.com/32virus.html#scan>

Download:
ftp://ftp.symantec.com/public/english_us_canada/antivirus_definitions/norton_antivirus/0610i32.exe
(1.4 MB)
Rating: Untested
- Servers --
- CSM Proxy Server v4.1 Patch 1 - a Proxy
Server
Location: <http://serverwatch.internet.com/proxyservers.html#csmpoxyplus>

Download: <http://www.csm.co.at/proxy/ppatches.htm>
(0.3 MB)
Rating: 4 Stars
- Eudora Internet Mail Server v1.2.1 Beta 6 -
a Mail Server
Location: <http://serverwatch.internet.com/mailservers2.html#eims>

Download: <ftp://ftp.qualcomm.com/eudora/eims2/demo21/eims21demo.hqx>
(1.5 MB)
Rating: 4 Stars
- First Class Intranet Server v5.11 - a Mail
Server
Location: <http://serverwatch.internet.com/mailservers3.html#fcis>

Download: <ftp://ftp.softarc.com/fcis/servers/windows/fcis511.exe>
(2.4 MB)
Rating: 4 Stars
- * InterMail Post.Office v3.5 - a Mail Server
Location: <http://serverwatch.internet.com/mailservers2.html#postoffice>

Download: <http://www.software.com/products/post.office/downloadnt.html>
(11.7 MB)
Rating: 4 Stars
- Rumpus 1.2 Beta 1 - a FTP Server
Location: <http://serverwatch.internet.com/ftpservers.html#rumpus>

Download: <http://www.maxum.com/downloads/RumpusDev.sit.hqx>
(1.1 MB)
Rating: 4 Stars
- DMail Email Server v2.2a - a Mail Server
Location: <http://serverwatch.internet.com/mailservers4.html#dmail>

Download: <http://www.netwinsite.com/dmail/download.htm>
(1.4 MB)
Rating: 3 Stars

5. Top 25 Downloads - Movers and Shakers

The June 15th update for the Top 25 Downloads on CWSApps is now available. Here are the apps that have moved up (the 'movers') or have fallen (the 'shakers') seven or more places during the past week. For the complete Top 25 results for the past week, check out:

<http://cws.internet.com/top25weekly.html>

You can also check out the results for the entire month at:

<http://cws.internet.com/top25monthly.html>

--The Movers--

- Internet Explorer - a Web Browser
<http://cws.internet.com/32www.html#ie>

Up to #1 from #15!

- QuickTime - a Multimedia Viewer
<http://cws.internet.com/32video.html#qtw>

Returns to the list at #14

- TextPad - a Text/HTML Editor
<http://cws.internet.com/32html.html#textpad>

Returns to the list at #15

- Cosmo Player - a VRML Browser
<http://cws.internet.com/32vrml.html#cosmo>

Debuts this week at #24

--The Shakers--

- Microsoft Media Player - an Audio/Video App
<http://cws.internet.com/32audio.html#msmedia>

Down from #10 to #23

- Eudora Pro - a Mail Client
<http://cws.internet.com/32mail.html#eudorap>

Exits the list (#31) from #18

- Microsoft Liquid Motion - a Web Graphics Tool
<http://cws.internet.com/32webimg.html#msliquid>

Exits the list (#30) from #22

- AtomTime - an Internet Utility
<http://cws.internet.com/32win.html#atomtime>

Exits the list (#33) from #24

ServerWatch.com is the ultimate resource on the Net for timely and accurate data about Web server technology. Because the Web server market is so unique and changes so rapidly, Webmasters utilize ServerWatch.com daily to stay current with the latest server products and industry advancements. You'll love the user-friendly layout featuring the latest news and trends. Visit <http://serverwatch.internet.com> now and get a quick, easy snapshot of what each of the listed servers has to offer.

6. Cool App of the Week - Adobe ImageReady

Location: <http://cws.internet.com/32webimg.html#imageready>

Download: <ftp://ftp.adobe.com/pub/adobe/magic/imageready/win/irltry.exe>

(9.9 MB)

Version: 1.0 Beta 2

Rating: 4 Stars

- ADOBE IMAGEREADY -

Web graphics creation and optimization tools are all the rage lately, and the competition should only get fiercer as the big boys continue to enter the fray. Tools like Ulead's GIF Animator and GIF Construction Set brought about the emergence of Web graphics tools. But while these apps focused primarily on creating animated GIFs, the new class of products widens the scope to creation, manipulation, and optimization capabilities for all types of Web graphics. The latest Web graphics tools from the likes of Adobe (ImageReady), Macromedia (Fireworks), and to a lesser extent Microsoft (Liquid Motion) fill a need currently lacking in commercial graphics applications like Adobe Photoshop. And while most of the new tools may be a bit on the expensive side, if you spend any significant amount of time developing or working with graphics for the Web, the high price of one of these tools is more than offset by the savings in time, frustration, and overall satisfaction.

- PERFECT COMPANION TO PHOTOSHOP -

Adobe ImageReady is the perfect complement to Photoshop and Illustrator. The app gives users a complete set of tools for publishing graphics on the web. Image compression in real time, built-in editing tools, quick and easy animation features, and batch-processing capabilities help you develop, optimize (via the LiveView window--see Figure 1 on <http://cws.internet.com/32webimg-imageready.html>), and animate images. The interface is a breeze to get up and running with, especially for users of Photoshop or Illustrator. Many (but not all) of Photoshop's design tools have made their way into ImageReady, including key tools like marquee, lasso, eraser, pencil, paintbrush, and eyedropper; resizing commands; image adjustment commands; and Photoshop filters. The new tools are simply intuitive Web extensions of existing features in Photoshop. Photoshop is the premier imaging software app, but it has always been geared more toward print media--i.e., publishing images in advertisements, newsletters, magazines, etc. Rather than incorporating a complete set of Web graphics tools into Photoshop, Adobe decided to develop the standalone ImageReady client instead. While many users might prefer to have ImageReady's set of Web tools built into Photoshop, one advantage to keeping them separate is that Adobe will be able to release ImageReady on a faster development cycle, insuring that users have the latest tools at their disposal for the always rapidly evolving Web.

- BETA 2 NOW AVAILABLE -

ImageReady is now in its second beta and is about a month away from official release. The second beta release adds several new features, including improved color reduction for better optimization, support for the recently released Photoshop 5.0, the ability to import a folder as a group of animation frames (with support for Adobe After Effects), and the ability to make a group of animation frames from a set of layers. As part of its support for Photoshop 5.0, ImageReady also offers Layer Effects, one of the new features in the latest release of Photoshop. Much like Fireworks' LiveEffects, Layer Effects allow you to apply effects like drop shadows and bevels to an image layer, and then any time the layer is modified ImageReady will dynamically update the effect as well. One particularly useful feature in ImageReady is that when you select any pixel in an image, you are not only given its RGB (Red, Green, and Blue) values but also its hexadecimal value and its X and Y position in the image. The hexadecimal value is valuable if you want to blend a graphic in with a background color on a Web page. If you've been using Photoshop or a similar tool to create Web images, you've probably had to open a

third-party utility or an HTML editor like HotDog Pro in order to find the hexadecimal value of a color. Thanks to ImageReady, no longer will you have to leave your graphics program in order to find a color's corresponding hexadecimal value. Macromedia's Fireworks offers a similar feature except it shows the RGB values or the hexadecimal values but not both at the same time.

- CREATING ANIMATED GRAPHICS -

Creating animated graphics with ImageReady is a relatively straightforward process, but unless you are creating an extremely simple animation, you'll save yourself a lot of time and frustration by using a specialized tool like Ulead's GIF Animator. GIF animation tools offer a variety of features and effects that you won't find in apps like ImageReady and Fireworks. These tools not only make it easier to create animations, they also allow you to create more effective and better optimized animations (for example, the animation in Figure 2 at <http://cws.internet.com/32webimg-imageready.html> optimized with GIF Animator uses only 8.4 KB, whereas with ImageReady it occupies 12.8 KB). Two areas of animation where ImageReady does excel, however, are in its ability to import a folder as a group of animation frames and the ability to make a group of animation frames from an existing set of layers--two features not available in most GIF animation tools.

- IMAGEREADY FEATURES -

Features in the current release of ImageReady include support for Photoshop API filters; editable/scalable text (a new feature in Photoshop as of v5.0), tweening (a cool morphing-like feature that blends aspects of different images, creating interim instances with transitional attributes), the ability to create client-side image maps (by assigning URLs to layers in an image), two adaptive color palette controls (straight adaptive and perceptual, which weights colors for human sensitivity and significantly improves quality in most cases), a lock button on optimized color palettes that allows you to "lock down" specific colors so that they won't be dropped when reducing the overall number of colors, and a Web shift button for automatically shifting a specific palette color to the closest Web-safe palette color. Additional features include a Droplets tool that allows you to drag and drop a batch of files and have them automatically compressed using a set of user-defined options, a history palette that keeps track of every compression scheme you've tried for an image and allows you to step through previous versions to compare image quality, a browser dither view that simulates the preview of a browser on an 8-bit (256 color) display, automatic rasterization of Illustrator and other vector-based image files, gamma preview and correction capabilities that automatically account for differences between viewing images on Windows and Mac platforms, and automated image slicing capabilities (allows designers to split an image along user-defined guidelines for more precise layout control on the Web).

- LIMITATIONS -

ImageReady definitely isn't perfect, which shouldn't really come as a surprise considering the client is still in beta release. The client is quite buggy in a number of areas and needs considerable tweaking in terms of performance. The real-time image optimization is an extremely cool feature, but in the beta release it takes entirely too long to convert images--especially for large graphics. Online help documentation is also absent in the beta release. ImageReady lacks a few of Fireworks' more Web-centric features as well, including its JavaScript rollover capabilities (automatically generates HTML code for interactive buttons and other graphics), its support for server-side image maps in addition

to the more popular client-side image maps, and its vector-based interface, which allows you to apply customizable Live Effects to any object. Fireworks also edges out ImageReady in terms of optimization capabilities. The ability to view a nonoptimized image side by side with an optimized image (or even three different optimized images) is a standard feature in Fireworks that is sorely missed in ImageReady. And in terms of optimization effectiveness and quality, for the most part Fireworks again edges out ImageReady, largely due to its support for LZW interframe optimization. However, ImageReady does a much better job of optimizing JPEG images than Fireworks (except it takes ImageReady considerably longer to optimize them).

- SUMMARY -

Overall, ImageReady serves as a great sidekick to Adobe Photoshop, but at \$199 (\$100 cheaper than Fireworks incidentally) ImageReady isn't for everyone. And at this early stage, you definitely won't want to throw out your specialized GIF animation, image optimization, and image creation tools. ImageReady is a huge step forward, but the specialized tools still offer more features and functionality. But if you're a current user of Photoshop and have been looking for an all-in-one Web graphics suite, ImageReady makes for the perfect companion. Pros: Excellent selection of tools for publishing graphics on the Web, LiveView optimization window, Photoshop interface Cons: Lacks some of the features found in specialized GIF animation, image optimization, and image creation apps

The Linux Advocate
Column #15
by Scott Dowdle
dowdle@icstech.com

June 18th, 1998

LOGIN:

On a personal note, I've been working graveyard shifts for the last two weeks and I've really had trouble sleeping which means I've also had trouble being productive. Now being grumpy, that's been easy for me lately. :)

Hmmm, what's been going on this past week?

Lots of stuff. Opera Software has added Linux to its supported platforms list but who knows when their browser will be made available for Linux? I guess it all depends on how clean and portable their Windows source is. I fondly remember going through a round of emails with a representative at Opera Software. This was a while back when they were soliciting email feedback on which platforms they should support and were tallying the responses they got. The Opera rep. I talked to noted that given reported size of the Linux community, they had received a paltry amount of email from the Linux community. I counter that that was probably because the Linux community wasn't all that interested in proprietary, commercial software and that if Opera Software decided to release their source code to the world, the Linux community would come alive with interest. :) Anyway, this was long before Netscape decided to release the source to Mozilla. The response I got back from the Opera rep. was that there was no way they would ever consider releasing their

source code because it simply would reveal too many of their programming secrets to the competition. Whatever dude. I look back on it and laugh especially after Netscape did what they did.

The Linux distribution makers have been busy with releases and fixes. I received my official copy of Red Hat Linux 5.1 via UPS last Friday and spent much of the week upgrading my laptop and desktop... and playing with them both. Red Hat has since found lots of security holes and a few things broken... and has released approx. 69MB worth of update .rpm files. While that may sound like a hell of a lot, there is a lot of overlap. The release of XFree86 on the CD had a security hole and every X server was updated, which makes up quite a bit of that 69MB.

I ended up ftping about 29MB worth of update packages. That might sound like a pain but at least Red Hat keeps their ear to the ground on security issues and fixes problems immediately. The ERRATA section on their homepage documents any and all problems and provides links to the related upgrade packages. About the only problem upgrading is finding a site that will accept an FTP connection... as many of them are extremely active this close to the release. Luckily there are a few dozen mirrors to pick from.

Slackware has released a new version of their distribution. I'm not too hip on Slackware so forgive me for not documenting it here in the column. I believe the current release of Slackware is 3.5.

Speaking of distributions, I'll probably be trying out Debian when its next release comes out just so I can keep up with it.

Debian definitely has the bulk of software packages included. This is accurate but the last I heard it included somewhere around 1,200 software packages.

Red Hat is around 500 or something.

As stated last column, this will probably be the last time I devote a considerable amount of the column to Linux news since Slashdot and the Linux Weekly News site do such a good job. I don't even have to give the URLs for those sites anymore because many of the URLs I'll list in the news items below are sourced from them.

As noted last column, GIMP v1.0 was released and YES I did have a chance to check it out. The version of GIMP that shipped with Red Hat 5.1 was v0.99.28 and I played with it before I went out and ftp'ed GIMP v1.0.

To be honest with you, the differences are are so subtle I didn't notice them. :)

In any event, GIMP is a very stable product and I can vouch for that. I'll put GIMP up against Photoshop any day. As I understand it, and I could be wrong, the development cycle for Adobe Photoshop has been rather slow in the last couple of years... and several hardware platforms have been completely dropped. GIMP is aggressively developed and multiplatform... when it comes to Unix flavors anyway. No Windows nor Mac version of GIMP is on the radar screen and it's not likely... which is kind of a shame that so many Windows and Mac users can't check it out for themselves. Hmmm, I wonder how many people would install Linux just to check out GIMP. There's a thought. :)

NEWS: [in no particular order]

Item #1: IBM changes WWW server direction -

The Apache WWW server has a new supporter, IBM. A story entitled, "IBM to Adopt Apache as Preferred E-commerce Web Server," may be found at the following URL:

http://www.thestandard.net/articles/news_display/0,1270,720,00.html

Item #2: Caldera in Power Computing - There is a review of the latest Caldera OpenLinux in the pages of Power Computing, a publication that was formerly known as Unix Review. You can check it out at the following URL: <http://www.performancecomputing.com/reviews/software/9807.shtml>

Item # 3: ZDNet in UK zooms in on Linux -

This month seems to be one of the biggest for Linux coverage in the press to date. I could have flooded the news section with URLs and print publication references but this single reference should do nicely. The UK side of ZDNet has put together what they call "Linux Focus: The Linux story." It's a series of articles so be sure to look through them all if you so desire at the following URL:

<http://www.zdnet.co.uk/news/1998/22/ns-4653.html>

Item #4: This just in: Microsoft allows OEMs to go to the bathroom

...Story at 11 - Although the title is satirical, visit the following URL for a more comparative look at the Microsoft monopoly power in action.

Its a funny read so check it out at the following URL:

<http://www.infoworld.com/cgi-bin/displayNew.pl?petrel/980608np.htm>

Item #4: ICGnu? - A project to offer an alternative to ICQ on various platforms has been formed. Actually, several have formed. Anyway, most of the info is on the developers front but you may read about ICGnu (which includes links to similar projects) at the following URL:

<http://www.azstarnet.com/~kennric/icgnu.html>

Item #5: Linux Ports updates - I've mentioned the various ports of Linux to the plethora of computer hardware in our computing world but given the aggressive and rapid development of Linux and all of the ports that have sprung up, it's a rather daunting area to keep up with. I've found a WWW page dedicated to the task of keep up to date on the statuses (is that a word) of the ports. Check out this URL:

http://www.ctv.es/USERS/xose/linux/linux_ports.html

Item #6: PC Week: And now for something completely different: Linux -

<http://www.zdnet.com/pcweek/opinion/0608/08week.html>

I wrote an email to the author in response and you can find yet another response at the following URL: <http://lwn.net/980618/brown.html>

Item #7: Extreme Linux reviewed - ZDnet provides an overview and an introductory review of Extreme Linux (Red Hat's release of their distribution with integrated with NASA's Beowulf software for network clustering at the following URL:

<http://www.zdnet.com/pcweek/reviews/0608/08linux.html>

It's a decent review and they come to the conclusion taking advantage of a network clustering environment is complex and requires custom software authoring... which isn't much of a surprise... one just can't buy high-power, super-computer, specific research goal software packages off the shelf.

What a surprise, NOT! :)

Speaking of Beowulf (which Extreme Linux is a distribution of), a proposal has been made for the formation of a Beowulf Documentation project. You may checkout the proposal as represented at the following URL: <http://lwn.net/980618/beowulfdp.html>

Red Hat Software wants to publish a book on Beowulf and has been looking for a writer. It turns out that Don Becker (primary author of many network card drivers in the Linux kernel) is already in the process of writing a book on the subject. Anyway, you can read about Red Hat's request as represented at the following URL:

<http://lwn.net/980618/beowulfdoc.html>

Beowulf is making waves in the super-computing community and development team well versed in the areas of super-computing have decided to port their impressive MOSIX software to Linux. MOSIX is a mechanism for transparently migrating processes (running programs) from one node to another, either in response to user requests, or in order to load-balance. Information about the MOSIX can be found at the following URL:

http://www.cs.huji.ac.il/mosix/txt_what-is.html

Item #8: From BIG to SMALL - MicroTimes has article on the Linux port to the PalmPilot. Since I spent a lot of time talking about Beowulf in the previous news item, it's only fair that I also talk mention recent Linux activities on the other side of the computing scale... on a micro controller.

To learn about the port of Linux to the 3Com PlamPilot, check out the following story in that gives a decent rundown:

<http://www.microtimes.com/180/unix.html>

More current PalmPilot info was recently posted on the Linux Weekly News site. Check out the following URLs:

<http://lwn.net/980618/debpilot.html>

<http://lwn.net/980618/debpilot2.html>

Item #9: GIMP manual now online - ...but the conversion from FrameMaker to HTML was a bit spotty and the manual is better viewed in the Postscript or PDF formats. I checked it out (that mention of spotty was taken from the GIMP news page) and the online manual is great! :) Oddly enough, you can find it at:

<http://manual.gimp.org>

Item #10: Latest devel kernel - Linux kernel 2.1.106 out on 13June98.

For complete info, checkout: <http://www.linuxhq.com/kpatch21.html>

Item #11: Microsoft running Linux and Apache? - Well, I just checked it and it's now down, but for a few days, a machine within Microsoft was accessible over the Internet with proof that Microsoft is running Linux.

This is no surprise since they have been porting software to Linux lately (Netshow for example). What's funny about this apparent slip is the name: linus. As we all know, Linus Torvalds is the primary father of Linux. I wonder if anyone at Microsoft got fired for this? :) Anyways, the URL was:

<http://linus.microsoft.com>
(no longer up)

It wasn't anything fancy, it was just the default Apache WWW page as provided by the default Red Hat Linux install showing the Apache and Red Hat logos and links to the master sites for both. This isn't hearsay, I visited and saw the site for myself... before it got removed.

Item #12: Slashdot in the press? - I've mentioned Slashdot time and time again in this column so I thought it noteworthy to mention a recent article about Slashdot in the digital pages of Salon magazine. They did make a mistake in referring to the URL for the Slashdot site. While www.slashdot.org will lead you there after a few clicks, the preferred domain name is slashdot.org. It's fun, geekie reading so check out the following URL:

<http://www.salonmagazine.com/21st/>

Item #13: MSNBC talks Red Hat? - Recently a review of the Red Hat Linux 5.1 distribution appeared on the MSNBC site. Check out the following URL for yet another positive review which is entitled, "Free OS is ready for prime time":

<http://www.msnbc.com/news/172571.asp>
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SPOTLIGHT:

Evan Leibovitch recently (June 9th, 1998) wrote an online paper entitled, "The four phases of Linux acceptance." I found it excellent reading and therefore decided to make it the spotlight item of this weeks column. Although it is represented here, it is available with the formatting originally done by the author at the following URL:

<http://www.xunil.com/xunil/r-j4phases.html>

(begin huge quote here)

The four phases of Linux acceptance:
An approach to Linux advocacy
By Evan Leibovitch
(evan@xunil.com)
June 9, 1998

The rapid growth of Linux, which has come out of nowhere to become the fastest growing non-Microsoft operating system, has taken many by surprise:

* Journalists who are supposed to keep their eye on the industry, have to cope with an OS that lacks a PR firm, yet boasts an army of articulate and zealous advocates who will eagerly pounce on a writer's ignorance.

* Software vendors looking for markets to sell to, have no idea whether Linux is as good a market as some say, or as bad as others claim.

* Other operating system vendors, that is those who acknowledge Linux exists, don't know what to make of it; nobody can even get a good count of how many of its users are out there!

* Resellers, distributors and VARs struggle to figure out how to make money from a product that people can download, with source code, for nothing. From observing the history of Linux as well as that of Unix before it, one can observe that the opensource community sometimes exhibits difficulty dealing with the reaction it gets from the rest of the computing world. Part of this difficulty arises because the computing world has shown so many different reactions, from appreciation to total indifference to active hostility and everything in between.

According to this analysis, attitudes towards Linux in the computing world tend to follow a pattern, and go through four distinct phases in consistent order: Ignorance, Denial, FUD, and Acceptance. Understanding these phases, their motivations and tactics, allows those who wish to encourage the use of Linux to better advance their position.

Phase 1: Ignorance

Of course, not knowing the facts never stops people from offering opinions or judgment. But don't be fooled by those who don't know what they're talking about. A sure sign that someone is in Phase 1 is some offhand comment that "Linux is just a hacker system"; while it indicates that the speaker has heard of Linux and knows it's some kind of computer software, you can't take anything for granted past that. (For all you know, the speaker may just be playing dumb and is really at Phase 3.)

Of course, there are a great many computer users who still have never heard of Linux; while their number is shrinking it's still quite considerable. Remember that the entire Linux world's advertising budget probably amounts to what Microsoft spends on ballpoint pens. We don't have an army of PR flaks, spin doctors, marketing mavens and advertising reps like The Other Guys do. In some media, if you don't buy ads you don't exist; so someone could be reading a fair number of Windows/PC magazines and never know that such a thing as Linux, or any other alternative to Microsoft, exists. The lack of press Linux gets in many PC-centric magazines is compounded by a narrow Wintel-centered view of the computing universe shared by many business computer users:

"People who labor in a PC-only realm (and there are far more of them alone in PC-land than in UNIX country) simply do not understand [...] professional, technical computing" -- Mark Hall, Performance Computing magazine
Microsoft has been very successful convincing much of the North American populace that any computing job can be solved cleanly and easily if you only throw enough NT servers at it. This, combined with Microsoft's attention to ease-of-use features, is a very tough nut to crack. So how to deal with the Ignorant? Many people who have never heard of Linux will probably be interested to know that alternatives exist. Microsoft's recent problems with US federal and state governments have called public attention to the company's unfair business practices, and many people will at least be open to listening to alternatives. Do make every effort to talk to people on their level; try to avoid

technobabble wherever possible unless you know your audience can get your point.

Emphasize Linux's popularity, its growth, and the fact that it's trusted by a growing number of companies and government agencies. Don't expect people to embrace Linux immediately; introduce the concepts, maybe offer them a few URLs, and let them come around at their own speed. Nobody likes to be rushed.

Avoid Microsoft bashing, especially at this point; if you can't introduce Linux without badmouthing Windows, you'll turn off your audience. Give them enough credit, that they'll know themselves about the limitations of what they normally use. And if that means that Windows is "good enough" for their needs, then be prepared to accept that. You'll have planted the bug in their ear, and they'll know there's another choice when "good enough" is no longer good enough.

Phase 2: Denial

While most end-users will totally bypass this level, it's a common resting ground for vendors, software developers, media types and potential competitors who believe that the best way to treat Linux is to pretend (or convince themselves) that it doesn't exist. Typical of this is the Adobe reaction to the question "why don't you port your apps to Linux?": While they'd been asked this question enough times to warrant a FAQ-style web page (which they've since deleted) to respond, Adobe's answer dismissed Linux as too small a market to bother with. (Adobe's deleting these pages means one of two things; they've either moved onto another phase or gone even deeper into Denial.) Then there are magazines that claim to cover the whole PC universe (PC World comes to mind); but to go through their pages, you'd never know a thing about the world's fastest-growing operating system. To those who believe that even bad attention is better than no attention, being treated as a non-entity can be the most frustrating attitude of all. Right now, Deniers have a strong fact on their side; nobody really knows just how many people out there use Linux. We know there is a "Linux counter" web site, but that only registers in the tens of thousands and you know that's not accurate. But just how do you count Linux use? You can't just go to Linux vendors and count shipments like you can with IBM or SCO; all of what's commonly known as Linux (before vendors add on commercial elements) can be freely distributable; once you get a Linux CD, its opensource components (which is the vast majority of any distribution) can be passed around to everyone. On the other hand, if you buy the 14-CD, multi-distribution Linux: The Professional Edition, just how many Linuxs should be counted? Because of the low cost of getting it, people can try out many versions, many distributions, before settling on one. And because of the price, only a few distributions even bother with special update packages; most people can easily just buy the next release complete. Some CD makers, in place of an update contract, simply sell subscriptions to their Linux CD packages. All this makes it very, very difficult to accurately count exactly how many computers around the world boot Linux. Professional research companies such as International Data Group, usually adept at doing this kind of thing, are having fits. At least one IDG report is quoted as accepting the research done by Red Hat president Bob Young, who derives a 1998 Linux installed base no smaller than five million and possibly higher than 10 million.

So have pity on the Deniers; time is not on their side. IDG reported that Linux is the only non-Microsoft operating system to be increasing its percentage of use on the world's computers. As Microsoft runs into legal

problems and its products' flaws become more exposed, the world will look for alternatives; and Linux will be at the top of the list. In the meantime: Do approach those organizations and people that you believe should be including Linux in their work but aren't, and find out if they're genuinely lacking in facts (in which case they're still in Phase 1), or deliberately staying silent. Try to convince them, using facts, that Linux is no longer a niche, a plaything or a social experiment. Emphasize the data in the IDG reports, the Red Hat paper, and the recent moves by Corel and Netscape to embrace Linux as primary platforms. Demonstrate the market potential to software developers. Feel free to suggest that anyone who claims to know the industry, yet actively ignores such an active phenomenon as Linux, risks losing credibility amongst a populace that's becoming more aware each day. Don't insist that everyone must support Linux or even call attention to it.

Some folks just like sticking to a certain kind of expertise, or have their preferences, and Linux isn't going to win every battle. Live with it. Avoid getting into useless arguments with those who refuse to acknowledge what they know is out there. Whether it's pressure from advertisers, irrational bias, or other agenda, Deniers have reasons for their actions that simple logic alone may not be able to counter. In these cases, it may just be necessary to wait them out.

Phase 3: FUD (Fear, Uncertainty, and Doubt)

Here, things get interesting; this is where the genuine Linux-bashers hang out. FUD is the realm of those who have discovered Linux and acknowledge its popularity, but refuse to engage in head-on competition. Instead, they actively seek to retard its growth by spreading mistruths, rumours, or information that's been out of date for ages. This is done with the specific purpose of inhibiting the acceptance of Linux into the mainstream. (Of course, don't confuse FUD-spreaders with those who have merely heard all they know about Linux from FUD-spreaders. These folk are really still at Phase 1, except that there's a little un-learning to do.) The term "FUD" goes back to the IBM mainframe days, when one of the best tactics to put down a competitor was merely to suggest that things might not work as promised, that things worked better merely if/because IBM said they did, and who wants to trust their business to these upstarts anyway?

Well, now it's happening with Linux -- by the truckload. Anyone who doesn't want Linux to succeed, yet is confronted with it too much to be a Denier anymore, arrives in to the land of FUD.

FUD takes many forms, but most often shows up in the mouths of those who believe they stand to lose something (money, prestige, power) from the success of Linux. No, money need not be the only incentive; a writer may have too much time, effort and emotion invested in something different; so rather than consider Linux as an alternative, the answer is often to put down Linux -- as if offering an excuse for not considering it.

Two key words will always expose a Phase 3 attack: "no support".

Over and above the official, commercial-grade support programs that Caldera and Red Hat have developed, the Linux community-based support model has been winning awards for its effectiveness. And the support network grows still, thanks to Red Hat and Caldera partner programs that help bring professional support right to the door.

Yet the FUD-mongers continue to write and announce and proclaim, whining that Linux lacks any kind of organized commercial support. Why? This is a classic FUD tactic. While features, reliability and flexibility can be measured and charted, support can't easily be gauged this way. Furthermore, lack of support is the kind of accusation that can make a corporate computer admin fearful and uncertain; "would you trust your company and the computer facilities on which it relies, to a system without adequate support?" Can Linux run as well and reliably as a company who over-prices their goods in order to give clients the warm-and-fuzzies? It's a tune that plays well in the more insecure and bureaucratic corners of corporate computing. To some, the hand-holding is more important than the computer itself, and there's always the knowledge that if things go wrong, you can always blame the vendor.

(Of course, blaming the company, or sitting for hours on hold on a tech-support line, is no guarantee you're going to get things working. But supposedly it makes some people feel better...)

To be sure, there are other Linux myths that have become popular FUD fodder;

- * It changes too fast and often for business use (only if you want to be bleeding edge; stick with a major distribution and go slow as you choose);
- * It's all made and used by hackers (by some definitions this was true at the beginning, but Linux in business is now commonplace);
- * No applications (They must be kidding, or they think the only applications worth counting are those that empty your wallet). There are others, but you get the idea. Their common element is being based on information that was either never true or rendered obsolete long ago. Also watch for style of presentation -- FUD-mongers rarely make direct accusations or assertions, their main intent is to cause doubt and confusion about Linux rather than attacking it head-on. When dealing with these people;

Do confront the innuendo and rumours directly. And do your homework -- being well-versed in the state of Linux today is essential for rebutting tired and obsolete complaints.

Emphasize fact and logic rather than beliefs or emotions. Most Phase 3 types would love nothing more than to portray Linux users as fanatical and irrational.

Don't mistake informed criticism as FUD. Linux isn't perfect and has a long way to go in some areas. There can often be legitimate beefs mixed in with a lot of garbage; don't go blindly attacking everything that's said before measuring FUD-factor.

Avoid wasting too much time with Phase 3 folk directly. They know about Linux and have chosen to undermine it -- some may even be getting paid to -- so there's already an agenda at work you may not be able to counter. At a certain point you may simply have to give up on them, and concentrate efforts on presenting a balanced view to their audience. In this combat zone, the only real weapon is fact.

Phase 4: Acceptance

Note, this phase is not called "love" or "conversion" or anything like

that.

Accepting Linux need not mean using it or even liking it. There's no point writing about how to "deal" with people and companies with which you agree totally. Acceptance includes all who take Linux seriously and deal with it on its merits, and not all such reaction can be expected to be favourable. Few computer vendors publicly acknowledge

Linux as competition, so the community hasn't had to deal with it much -- yet. Linux hasn't been explicitly attacked in advertising or public statements the way Dell has gone after Unix or how Sun has attacked Microsoft. It'll be interesting to see when that starts happening, and what effect it will have. While nobody likes being attacked, just the fact that Linux will have become a target gives it legitimacy in the eyes of some.

A small but growing number of software companies are reaching this plateau, and some have gone as far as to incorporate opensource models into their own development. However, just because a commercial software company chooses not to support Linux does not necessarily mean they're hostile or ignorant. Linux continues to provide some significant obstacles to commercial software developers that can't be explained away. Different distributions have chosen varying approaches to file placement, software management, and other subtleties, in such a way that makes it almost impossible to make an applications distribution that will install and run cleanly across the Linux spectrum.

When Interbase says their Linux database product is only supported on Red Hat, it's not because they want to blow off the rest of the market; they simply need a reference platform that they know and can support. This kind of problem, expressed nicely by John Taschek, in his column in the May 25 issue of PCWeek, must not be dismissed as Linux-bashing.

(Indeed, the problem of a standard porting base is significant enough that a project called the Linux Software Base has received unanimous endorsement from Linux International in an attempt to solve this exact problem.) Microsoft, in getting its feet wet in Phase 4, claims that the opensource software model lacks a marketing component which allows other companies (like Microsoft) to incorporate user needs (rather than developer needs) into products. While the situation is not as bad as MS claims, they're not totally wrong; the community cannot ignore, shout down or ridicule those in our midst who are knowledgeable, yet skeptical or even aggressively critical.

As Linux makes its way further into the mainstream of computing, and becomes increasingly used by non-developers, expect to hear more informed criticism describing what's wrong with Linux. When hearing them out: Do listen to complaints and engage in fair and rational discussion about the problems that people and organizations experience with Linux. If you think they're valid, try to bring them to the attention of the greater community. If you can, suggest and help implement solutions. This is, after all, a community effort!

Emphasize the openness of the process by which Linux has evolved, through which individuals from everywhere in the community can and do make a difference every day. The concept of "peer review" does not end at the source code; all facets of Linux are open to ongoing evaluation and revision as necessary.

Don't mistake FUD as informed criticism. Occasionally comments that

appear on the surface as real concern are just pretexts for FUD-based bashing. Don't get sucked into an argument you don't stand a chance of winning; phase 3 tactics apply.

Avoid making an issue of personal preferences. Part of Linux's power is that it's so darned flexible; but that flexibility means it can be different things to different people. Don't confuse "what you like" with "what Linux ought to be"; just because Linux is great for power-users doesn't mean it can't be made easy to use, for example.

Advocating Linux is rarely an easy task. Often it means going up against multi-million-dollar hype machines, and the massive inertia of people who simply can't (or won't) be bothered to explore alternatives. Take heart from the knowledge that Linux has momentum, it has a strong grassroots family around the world, and it's been making inroads into the computing world despite the best efforts of those trying to stop it.

These are indeed interesting times. Enjoy the ride. (end huge quote here)

LOGOUT:

There's a lot of stuff to follow and read in this edition of Linux Advocate. I challenge everyone to read everything mentioned here and provide feedback on what you thought via my email address. Can I possibly make a more blatant solicitation for email? I think not but I'll keep trying. :) Enjoy, Scott Dowdle (extremely close if not past deadline time!)

Taking Another Look

Nortel buys Bay Networks for \$9.1 bln

Northern Telecom Ltd., confirming a much rumored takeover, said Monday it planned to buy Bay Networks for \$9.1 billion. Nortel will offer 0.6 of a share for each Bay Networks share, which it said represents \$38.21 per Bay Networks share. Bay Networks will operate as a wholly owned subsidiary of Nortel, which expects to issue 134 million common shares to close the acquisition. Bay's shareholders will own about 21 percent of Nortel. Nortel's chief executive John Roth will remain in that position while Bay Network chief executive and chairman Dave House will become the president of Nortel. Microsoft, Compaq, cable cos in high-speed Web plan Computer, cable TV and media industry giants including Microsoft and Time-Warner said Monday they have closed a previously announced deal to deliver high-speed Internet services to up to 27 million U.S. customers. The deal, announced late last year, calls for Road Runner, Time Warner Inc.'s high-speed data delivery business, to market Internet services to cable TV customers. About 90,000 have signed up so far, the companies said.

Nader: Can't buy major-brand PC without Windows

Consumer advocates Ralph Nader and James Love said Monday they found it impossible to buy a nationally branded Intel-compatible personal computer without Microsoft Windows, and asked the Justice Department to take action. They said customers who want to purchase an Intel-compatible personal computer for use with some other operating system - the basic software that runs the computer - are "paying a 'tax' to Microsoft Corp. each time they buy a nationally branded computer." Their Consumer Project

on Technology ran a survey and found that no computer maker would sell a single Intel-compatible machine without Windows, they said. Even IBM, which makes its own rival operating system, insists on selling Windows to computer buyers.

James Joyce fans celebrate Bloomsday on Internet

Fans of the Irish writer James Joyce can participate in the annual Bloomsday celebration of Joyce's most famous novel "Ulysses" by listening to readings from all over the world for the first time via the Internet. Every year on June 16 Joycean fans and scholars celebrate what is known as "Bloomsday," a day in the life of Leopold Bloom, the central character of the much-studied "Ulysses." Joyce fans typically gather every year in bookshops or pubs and listen to actors or Joyce lovers read from passages of his critically-revered novel, "Ulysses" or other his writings. This is the first time readings from "Ulysses" will take place over the Internet in such a massive, organized effort.

Internet telephone success set to wound incumbents

Making telephone calls over the Internet is getting cheaper and easier, and will soon provide profit-threatening competition to established big operators, a report published on Tuesday said. According to the report from Cambridge-based telecommunications strategy consultancy Analysys, telephone business across the Internet will take 36% of the international call market by 2003. The first reaction of big operators in the U.S. to upstart Internet telephone providers was to seek to ban them. The FCC wouldn't go along with that, so they are gearing up the technology to fire back at the appropriate moment, the report's co-author said.

America Online to be installed by IBM

America Online Inc. and a business unit of IBM said they signed a multi-year marketing agreement in which IBM will pre-install AOL software on two lines of its computers. Aptiva and ThinkPad users will be able to access the pre-installed America Online software by clicking on an icon displayed prominently on the computer's desktop or front screen. America Online will in turn sponsor the IBM envelope containing information packaged inside Aptiva computers. America Online software will also be packaged with IBM-branded consumer modems. The agreement also includes a joint marketing campaign.

Nortel, Bay Networks deal draws criticism

Northern Telecom Ltd. and Bay Networks Inc., two companies seen as bypassed by rivals, agreed to join forces on Monday, but the deal quickly drew criticism as analysts said the combined company would face intense competition and internal product development challenges. "There's an awful lot of hype and fancy buzz words, but anyone who knows the realities of these two companies isn't buying it.... There needs to be modification of their product lines and creation of new products," said Christine Heckart, a vice president with consultancy TeleChoice. "They've positioned this as 'This gets us smack in the middle of a new opportunity for IP-centric (Internet protocol) networks.' But that's more hype than reality," Heckart said.

Wall Street cheers demise of Senate tobacco bill

The death of a contentious U.S. Senate tobacco bill removed a dire threat to the financial health of the nation's largest tobacco companies,

analysts said Thursday. Tobacco company stocks, which had been drifting lower as Congress debated Sen. John McCain's \$516 billion tobacco bill, rebounded following Senate votes Wednesday that effectively killed the legislation this year. "This industry faced two major threats - litigation and legislation - both of which were very, very material," Dean Witter Reynolds analyst David Adelman said. "After the Senate vote yesterday, one of those risks has been largely removed."

Ericsson in talks with Ascend & Others

Ericsson, one of the world's largest phone equipment makers, is in talks to acquire Ascend Communications and other computer networking companies, a source familiar with the negotiations says. Ericsson, which would have to pay at least Ascend's market value of \$9.5 billion, wouldn't comment on specific acquisition targets. The source says Ericsson wants to acquire a U.S. networking company after talks with Bay Networks failed. Northern Telecom since has agreed to buy Bay in a transaction now valued at \$7 billion.

EU says global Internet services should be taxed

European consumers who buy and receive products or services over the Internet should pay value-added tax (VAT) on them, even if they order from an overseas supplier, the European Commission said. The European Union executive, stepping into a controversial debate over how to tax the spiraling amount of global electronic business, said in a policy paper that all such transactions should be taxed as services. That would mark a "significant change," it noted, since private individuals who buy services from outside the EU do not now usually have to pay VAT - a consumption tax that is applied at varying rates in the 15 EU countries. However, if online transactions grow dramatically, that practice would be unfair, it said.

Sony launching PC into Europe, market turmoil

Japanese consumer electronics giant Sony launches its new personal computer in Europe Thursday, and analysts say it would be difficult to pick a worse time with prices under severe downward pressure. Prices for PCs are diving in Europe as manufacturers scampers to shift sales from dying markets in Asia. "We haven't seen price pressure of such magnitude since the beginning of the nineties. This is a special phase," said Simon Pearce, senior research director at high-technology consultancy IDC. And the so-called \$1,000 PC which has been available to Americans but until recently cost Europeans more like \$2,000, is fast becoming a reality here, analysts said. They said Sony's move into an overcrowded market with paper-thin margins is defensive.

Mideast software piracy is world's second highest

The rate of computer software piracy in the Middle East and Africa is the second highest in the world, but some regional states are taking successful steps to fight the crime, a software watchdog said. The U.S.-based Business Software Alliance said a recent study conducted by BSA and another watchdog group found that in 1997 the Middle East and Africa had a piracy rate of 65%, second only to Eastern Europe's 77%. In a statement, the group singled out the United Arab Emirates among states fighting software piracy, saying it had reduced its rate by 28% since 1995 to 60%, one of the highest reductions in the world.

C&W drops MCI lawsuit, but continues talks

Cable & Wireless Plc. dropped its breach of contract lawsuit against MCI Communications Corp. but continued discussions about buying MCI's Internet assets, a source familiar with the talks said Thursday. Cable & Wireless' move to drop the suit came at a crucial time in the delicate dance involving competition regulators in the U.S. and Europe who were reviewing the proposed merger of MCI and WorldCom Inc. Merger experts from the 15 European Union member states will meet Friday to consider a draft decision to ban the proposed \$37 billion merger unless the two U.S. telecommunications partners make sufficient concessions.

Internet ad spending tops \$351 million in Q1

First quarter Internet ad spending rose to \$351.3 million, setting a pace that would easily give the fledgling industry its first \$1 billion calendar year, the Internet Advertising Bureau said. Figures were based on data from more than 200 online publishers selling advertising, including Web sites, commercial online services and e-mail providers, which were compiled for IAB by the New Media Group of Coopers & Lybrand. Computees led all advertasing aategories with 27%, followed closely by consumer-related products at 25%, the IAB said. Other leading categories were telecommunications, 14%; financial services, 13%; and new media, 10%.

International communications satellite launched

An Atlas 2 rocket streaked into space Thursday carrying an international satellite that will provide transatlantic communications links. The Lockheed Martin Corp rocket, equipped with four strap-on boosters for extra thrust, blasted off its Cape Canaveral launch pad at 6:48 p.m. EDT. The white booster rose through smoke haze from Florida brush fires and streaked towards orbit. The satellite separated from the rocket's upper stage 30 minutes after launch. The spacecraft is owned by Intelsat, an international consortium of more than 140 countries, that operates a constellation of communications satellites.

Special Notice!! STR Infofile File format for Articles

File Format for STReport

All articles submitted to STReport for Publication must be sent in the following format. Please use the format requested. Any files received that do not conform will not be used. The article must be in an importable word processor format for Word 6.0 and/or Word Perfect 7…. The margins are .05" left and 1.0" Monospaced fonts are not to be used. Please use proportional fonting only and at Twelve (12) points.

No Indenting on any paragraphs!!
No Indenting of any lines or "special gimmicks"
No underlining!

Columns shall be achieved through the use of tabs only. Or, columns in Word or Word Perfect format. Do NOT, under any circumstances, use the space bar.

Most of ALL - PLEASE! No ASCII "ART"!!

There is no limits as to size, articles may be split into two if lengthy

Actual Artwork should be in GIF, PCX, JPG, TIF, BMP, WMF file formats
Artwork (pictures, graphs, charts, etc.) should be sent along with the
article separately

Please use a single font in an article. TTF Times New Roman 12pt. is
preferred. (VERY Strong Hint)

If there are any questions please use either E-Mail or call. On another
note - the ASCII version of STReport has reached the "end of the line" As
the major Online Services moved away from ASCII. So has STReport. All in
the name of progress and improved readability. The amount of reader mail
expressing a preference for HTML as opposed to our Adobe PDF enhanced
issue is running approximately 11 to 1 over the PDF edition. Cited are
size, graphic quality and speed of download.

I'm elated that requests for our issues in HTML far outnumber PDF. So PDF
too, like ascii, is gone. HTML is now a reality. On our web download
page is a selection for HTML (Read or Download). As you can see, STReport
will not be caught in the old, worn out "downward compatibility dodge" we
must move forward.

Many grateful thanks in advance for your enthusiastic co-operation and
input.

Ralph F. Mariano, Editor
rmariano@streport.com
STReport International Online Magazine

Classics & Gaming Section
Editor Dana P. Jacobson
dpj@streport.com

> From the Atari Editor's Desk "Saying it like it is!"
"*****"

WOW! What a difference a few months makes! It seems just a short time
ago that the West coast was being flooded out, burned out, or covered in
mud. The East coast is going through the same thing this past week. I
haven't seen this much rain in a long time. And now that I'm a
homeowner, I'm more than a little concerned. And it's not over yet.

Parts of the town I live in are under water. Fortunately, I'm a few
miles south of the affected areas. Very little water made it into my
basement, but some of my neighbors weren't as lucky. My pool was almost
full to the brim but we were vigilant enough to drain off water a few
times to make sure it didn't get damaged.

Ah yes, Mother Nature continues to do its thing! We saw the sun briefly
today (Thursday) but expect more rain through the weekend. How about
northeast Florida?! Lots of brush fires down there. We hope Ralph and
family are coping okay as his area is close to the "action". It's not
been a terrific June so far! Vacation coming up at the end of the month
and we're hoping the weather turns for the better so we can enjoy it.
Hope everyone on the East coast manages to ride out the weird weather

we're having and that the damage is non-existent.

Until next time...

AtariNews: On The Prowl -- June 17, 1998: Atari Conventions

LATEST HEADLINES:

JAGUAR FESTIVAL UPDATE

Details on this year's JagFest are coming together. Here are the "quick facts":

JagFest 98 will be held on August 1, 1998, in Corfu, NY. Tickets are \$10 each (\$12 at the door). It will last from 9am until midnight! Ticket price includes stickers and a special issue of the Atari Zone fanzine.

More details can be found at the official JagFest 98 website:
<http://www.geocities.com/Broadway/4062/>

For tickets, e-mail Kevin Manne at KevinManne@wycol.com.

1998 WORLD OF ATARI CONVENTION

A once-a-year International Atari Collectors/User Show is set for August 21-23, 1998 at the Holiday Inn Casino Boardwalk in Las Vegas. World Of Atari 98 is being promoted by Mr. Rich Tsukiji (the man responsible for bringing us all the terrific ST World Shows throughout the years), and Atari Gaming Headquarters (see the link below) will be providing the latest news surrounding this event as more details become available.

<http://www.atarihq.com/atari98/>

CLASSIC 2600 TITLES ON PLAYSTATION

Activision announced "Activision Classics" to be released this October. This title for PlayStation has 30 classic Atari 2600 games that are emulated to play exactly like they did on the 2600. The list of games includes Pitfall!, River Raid, Kaboom!, H.E.R.O., Chopper Command, Grand Prix, Boxing, Crackpots, Fishing Derby, Freeway, Frostbite, Seaquest, Sky Jinks, Spider Fighter, and 16 others. The collection will carry a suggested retail price of \$29.95. 1998 ATARI SURVEY RESULTS

The Jaguar's Domain recently sponsored a 1998 survey to gauge the interest level in new games for Atari consoles such as the 2600 VCS, Lynx, and Jaguar. The results can be found by visiting the Jaguar's Domain:

<http://www.millcomm.com/~forhan/jaguar.html>

and clicking on the "Survey Results (1998)" link.

COMPUTER DUNGEON MOVING SALE

From now until August 1st, The Computer Dungeon is having a MOVING SALE. With the exception of Shareware games, select hardware items, and magazines, all items on their list are 20% off the listed price.

Simply look over the list, select the item/s you want, give them a call to place your order and they'll take 20% off the total price of the items.

AND, if that's not enough, if your order totals \$75 or more, they'll take an additional 5% off the price, making your total discount 25%!

You can reach The Computer Dungeon at:

<http://www.mcs.net/~isis/dungeon/dungeon.htm>

JAGUAR EXPLORER ONLINE

Clay Halliwell (halliwee@dyess.af.mil) is the editor of Jaguar Explorer Online, or JEO for short. JEO is one of the premiere online sources of Atari Jaguar news and articles. Look for JEO #3 to be out within the next few days. Directions on how to download the next JEO will be posted in AtariNews.

Rumor has it that some previously unknown codes will be released for one or more Jaguar games!

THE PETITION TO HASBRO

The petition to Hasbro needs more names. If you would like to try to get Hasbro to support the Jaguar and Lynx, then please sign this petition. There are currently 104 names on the petition.

<http://www.geocities.com/timesquare/arcade/8063>

Send any comments or submissions for "AtariNews: On The Prowl" to: Brian Gudzevich (Editor) at: Brionhold@aol.com

Sponsoring web sites:

-The Atarian Atmosphere: <http://www.geocities.com/timesquare/arcade/8063>
-The Jaguar's Domain: <http://www.millcomm.com/~forhan/jaguar.html>

>In This Week's Gaming Section - "Jersey Devil"! "Thrill Kill!"
"Slingo"! "Chopper Attack!"
And much more!

>Industry News STR Game Console NewsFile - The Latest Gaming News!
"

Sony Computer Entertainment America Brings the Jersey Devil

FOSTER CITY, CALIF. (June 16) BUSINESS WIRE - June 16, 1998 - Making its way from Jersey City to the worldwide videogame front is Sony Computer Entertainment America's newest character-based, action adventure platform game, Jersey Devil, for the PlayStation game console, now available at stores nationwide.

Jersey Devil brings the darkly irreverent Jersey hero to life in this

real-time, action-packed adventure game with color-charged, 3-D cartoon animation; a 360-degree roving view game environment; challenging platform and puzzle-laden gameplay; wicked character attacks and moves; and twisted fun.

"Jersey Devil is a great complement to our PlayStation family of popular character-based action games," said Peter Dille, senior director, product marketing, Sony Computer Entertainment America. "Character-based action games continue to command broad attention among consumers around the world. This genre's proven appeal to game enthusiasts across all demographics and abilities will certainly drive the success of Jersey Devil."

In the game, our thrill-seeking crusader, the Jersey Devil, is on the loose and out to pay back the evil scientist and his insane genetic experiments. Players are challenged through 12 vast, 3-D cartoon animated levels filled with treacherous passageways, mysterious objects, intricate traps and bonus rounds, and a variety of marauding mutant enemies. Using such wicked moves as the Jersey Devil slide, somersault, glide, tail whip, punch and climb, players must outsmart the sinister Dr. Knarf and his many minions before they outmaneuver our hero. The game's mutant army includes Dennis the Pumpkin Head, the Lovely Olga, the hungry T-Rex, the Sumo wrestling Mole, Spraycula and others.

"The combination of powerful music and sound effects, striking cartoon animation and graphics, and smooth, action-packed gameplay creates an awesome game environment for our devilishly cunning hero. The huge, mystifying levels and loads of puzzles will keep gamers challenged for hours on end," added Dille.

Thrill Kill Nominated for Best Fighting Game of E3 Show

IRVINE, CALIF. (June 17) BUSINESS WIRE - June 17, 1998 - Unified Gamers Online, the largest independent gaming community on the Internet, announced that Thrill Kill has been nominated for the Best Fighting Game of the 1998 E3 show. Given annually through UGO's E3.Net site (<http://www.e3.net>) to members of the Computer and Video Game industry for excellence displayed at the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) Show, the UGO BEST OF THE E3 SHOW AWARD is voted on by the top journalists in the gaming trade.

Nominees were selected for the best new gaming products in 18 categories. Winners will be named on June 22, 1998. Twenty-seven journalists from twenty-two top gaming magazines participated in the 1998 UGO BEST OF E3 SHOW AWARDS Judges Committee. The UGO E3 AWARDS recognize outstanding new products for the console, personal computer and online game platforms. "Unlike other awards in the industry, which are presented to already released titles, our goal is to praise excellence and innovation in upcoming games," said Chris Sherman, editorial director of UGO.

Published by Spelling Entertainment's Virgin Interactive, the controversial Thrill Kill is the first 4-player fighter for the Sony PlayStation. Several twists have been put on the traditional fighter, such as the ability to multi-tap with three friends for four-way fighting which is unique to the PlayStation format. The four-player mode also opens up the opportunity for a player to engage in team play using special "gang-up" moves and group combos, such as allowing the player to

grab an opponent while his partner bashes in the enemy's head, and other moves never before seen in a 3-D fighting game.

Thrill Kill features over-the-top violence and combat between all manner of psychotic deviants, Thrill Kill is definitely not for the faint-hearted or squeamish. Instead of the usual fighting game fare of kung-fu masters and monsters, this frightening bloodbath pits eleven hellbound freaks, mutants and crazies against each other and lets them battle it out for a chance to return from purgatory to earth. Once immersed in the competition, gamers will voyage to deathmatch arenas set in some of the most nightmarish places on this earth and in the underworld including Hellevue, the Crematorium, the Slaughterhouse of Flesh, Sacrificial Ruins and Hell itself.

Thrill Kill's actual fight dynamic encourages the most intense gameplay. New to this genre is a "Kill Meter," a feature which awards the most brutal player with the ability to completely annihilate other opponents. Each round ends when one player is eliminated in this manner and the next round starts with the remaining combatants. This is not to say four-player mode is the only enjoyable aspect of Thrill Kill. Advanced Artificial Intelligence was incorporated to ensure the game would be challenging and fun whether one, two or three players were involved. A solo player will find himself challenged by computer opponents who learn to anticipate the player's tactics so that the player is constantly forced to come up with new fight combos in order to win. This phantasmagoric feast for fighting fans will feature an eerie, pulsating, alternative music/gothic rock soundtrack and is scheduled for release in Fall of 1998.

Hasbro Interactive to Develop America's Favorite Online Game: Slingo

BEVERLY, MASS. (June 16) BUSINESS WIRE - June 16, 1998 - Leading entertainment software publisher Hasbro Interactive announced today it has signed an agreement with Slingo, Inc. to develop the popular online game Slingo for the CD-ROM platform. Slingo debuted on the America Online Games Channel in October 1996 and quickly became the #1 game for the country's largest online service. Slingo, a clever combination of slots and bingo, has stolen the hearts of game players with its incredible game play and broad-based appeal.

"Slingo is an irresistible game," said Tom Dusenberry, President of Hasbro Interactive. "Once you start playing, you definitely are drawn into the excitement," Dusenberry added. "We are very excited to be able to work with the creative minds behind this great game and believe that together we can expand this game play experience to reach a whole new audience of computer owners."

"We look forward to working with entertainment software leader Hasbro Interactive," said Lou Del Prete, co-founder of Slingo, Inc. "Their experience at providing high quality entertainment software to the mass market audience will help us introduce many more game players to the outrageous fun of Slingo."

Slingo is a unique game of chance and strategy that combines the best attributes of bingo and slot machines. It is an engaging single and multiplayer game that provides players with the same excitement and exhilaration of a real casino. The game is currently being played on

America Online and on any given night several thousand online gamers can be found simultaneously at their computers scoring Slingo points and chatting away. Slingo, Inc. in conjunction with Hasbro Interactive plan to expand on the classic game play of Slingo providing "Slunkies" (short for Slingo junkies) with new ways to play their favorite game.

Midway Flies Aces High with Chopper Attack for Nintendo 64

CORSICANA, TEXAS (June 17) BUSINESS WIRE - June 17, 1998 - Immersive Combat and Flight Action Lands on Nintendo 64 this Summer

Dive into a fire fight, destroy enemy radar, rescue hostages and pull friendly aircraft out of dangerous territory. Do you have what it takes to fly a combat mission?

Midway Home Entertainment, a leading publisher of chart-topping entertainment software titles, challenges gamers to answer that question when they play the forthcoming Chopper Attack(TM). The combat flight simulation game for the Nintendo(R) 64 will be available on June 19.

"Chopper Attack incorporates exciting flying patterns and realistic combat maneuvers making it a stand-out helicopter sim," said Paula Cook, director of marketing at Midway Home Entertainment. "With its Rumble Pak(TM) feedback and the ability to support its stunning graphics, the Nintendo 64 is an ideal system for Chopper Attack's lifelike intensity."

Chopper Attack allows players to join an elite group of international chopper pilots with one objective - hunt down and destroy a renegade terrorist group bent on world domination. In Chopper Attack, players are commanded to engage and destroy the enemy over the course of eight action-packed missions. After choosing one of eight choppers, each equipped with different weapons and flying capabilities, players set out to blow up strategic enemy radar, shoot ground troops and destroy enemy aircraft while rescuing hostages and escorting friendly aircraft from dangerous territories.

During each Chopper Attack mission, fighter pilots are rewarded with power-ups for destroying enemy installations. These bonuses enhance the chopper's destructive capabilities. Upon successfully completing each mission, pilots are reimbursed with cash rewards that are used to upgrade their deadly arsenal. These deadly weapons include a homing missile, a straight-fire rocket bullet complete with ten shots and a cluster bomb that can collectively destroy on-land enemies and buildings.

Broderbund Hangs For Sale Sign

Jun 16, 1998 (MULTIMEDIA WIRE, Vol. 5, No. 115) -- Broderbund [BROD] effectively put itself on the trading block yesterday, saying it had retained investment bank Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette to explore "strategic alternatives."

The announcement fuels rumors of an impending acquisition of Broderbund that began last week, when trade publication Computer Retail Week reported that the company had held talks with potential suitor Hasbro

this spring.

While Broderbund has traditionally been strong in education software, it is struggling to compete with the sector's two giants, Cendant Software and The Learning Company [TLC]. In Q1, Broderbund had a 4.6% unit share of the education market, while Cendant had 27.9% and TLC 21.2%, according to The NPD Group (MMW, May 20). Hasbro Interactive, meanwhile, commands 2.9%.

Broderbund also said it expects Q3 revenues to fall short of analysts' expectations, at \$52m. It expects to post a loss of \$2.5m to \$3.3m, or 12 to 15 cents/share. The company's stock has risen from 17 in mid-May to more than 20 last week, but fell 3 to 17-3/16, on yesterday's news.

NetGames Launch Highlights Internet Gaming

This month sees the launch of NetGames (www.netgames.co.uk), a new Internet-based PC/console gamers club and games retail service. Dedicated to on-line operation, NetGames combines a variety of different sections including jokes, tips, cheats, shareware downloads and on-line purchasing facilities to provide a high-quality blend of 'club', 'fun' and 'retail' via its UK based web site. These will be supplemented in July with the introduction of a comprehensive on-line game reviews section.

With NetGames there are no joining fees or minimum purchases, in fact there are no costs at all. With membership, visitors have access to all sections of the web site, including the 'downloads' area where they can find free shareware games. Large areas of the site - such as the jokes and funnies sections - are open-access so users do not even have to become club members to enjoy them.

Visitors looking to purchase the latest games via the NetGames site can do so in the knowledge that, in the vast majority of cases, they will pay below retail prices and are guaranteed to never pay more. At all times, NetGames offers the industry agreed Top 50 games for PC, Nintendo and Sony Playstation on next day dispatch.

A 'launch Delivery' service also provides NetGames club members with an option to pre-order forthcoming releases and thereby avoid delays and disappointment when the games are issued. Pre-order a game through NetGames and you know that you will receive it on the day of public issue without ever leaving the house.

Guaranteed low prices is just one of the benefits of purchasing through NetGames. Every order is credited with Loyalty Points which accumulate to enable members to claim free games or NetGames merchandise such as T-Shirts and Baseball caps. Every purchase is also delivered with a free "Goodies Bag" containing a little something to show NetGames' appreciation of the members' purchase.

The NetGames web site can be accessed at <http://www.netgames.co.uk>

PEOPLE... ARE TALKING

Compiled by Joe Mirando
jmirando@streport.com

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. I can tell you right off that this is going to be a heck of an interesting column for me to write.

No, there's no hot news to make my heart pound and my pulse race. This evening, not thirty minutes before I sat down to write this column, I encountered a rather annoying hard drive crash. I had just enough time to re-install the most basic things (the text editors and newsgroup reader) needed for writing this column. All the nice touches such as my spelling checker and accelerators will have to wait until the column is done.

It's just another one of the Universe's little jokes, I guess. Like El Nino and his sister La Nina. It seems that we're beginning to feel her presence even before she makes herself visible. For those of you who don't know, La Nina is the opposite of El Nino. While El Nino is a huge patch of unusually warm water in the pacific ocean, La Nina is (or will be) a huge patch of unusually cool water in the pacific. Just as her better-known brother affects the atmospheric currents known as the jetstreams, so does La Nina, but in the opposite direction.

While some argue that we shouldn't put ourselves out to try to stop global warming because we don't even know for sure that we are causing it, isn't it only prudent to do all we can to protect ourselves and our future?

The days of the Reagan administration making light of the situation are over. It's time to, if not act, at least survey our options very carefully. Remember when Reagan aide James Watt said that the increase in ultraviolet light reaching the earth's surface meant only that we should start wearing sunglasses and sunblock, or that global warming meant simply that grains would grow better in Canada than Kansas?

Well, the jury is on it's way back, and I think we're going to find out that cattle don't wear sunglasses or sunblock. Nor do crops. And what exactly did Mr. Watt think was going to replace the crops that are now being grown in our heartland? Will we awaken one day to find a dry wasteland or a wet wasteland where there was once both beauty and bounty? I really don't know. I guess that puts me in the same boat as the nay-sayers. Where we differ though, is that I believe that we should do all we can to be sure that we are making the correct choices. If it turns out that what we are seeing is a natural occurrence, we will be no worse off than we would have been had we done nothing. If it turns out that we ourselves have been causing these changes, then we will have the knowledge (if not the foresight) to take corrective or pre-emptive action.

I don't want it to sound like I believe that we're doomed. I don't. I believe that we are in for some changes, and that lots of folks are going to be hurt by them, but that if we keep our heads... and use them, we will come out okay.

While we won't find the answers to this question in the Atari NewsGroups, we can at least take a look at what's going on with our favorite

machine...

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup
=====

Andy Mellor asks about "Y2K" compliance:

"Any info on Year 2000 compliance/non-compliance out there? We're still using a few STs as dumb terminals."

James Fillary Haslam tells Andy:

"Funnily enough, the ST is Y2K compliant, and has been since day one. Tests of lots of programs don't reveal many problems.

The only problem program that I know of is the Time/Date setting program for the battery-backed clock in the Forget-Me-Clock cartridge. This only accepts two-digits for the year. However there is a software patch knocking about that gets around this, which goes in the auto folder."

Galen, the Head YACcer, tells Andy:

"The ST clock is O.K. to 2028. Your software is another issue, though. Set the clock to 2000 and check.

Guy Harrison gets a bit more in-depth:

"The ST clock starts counting from zero when you turn the machine on. The current time and date is calculated by figuring this counter into the date Jan 1 1980 (ie the ST thinks it is 01/01/1980 when booted). This clock will not wrap around back to zero for another 30 years, so no problems there. The software responsible for setting the actual time/date only has to adjust the counter to the correct value - providing this software takes all four digits of the year into account there will be no problems.

This also applies if you have attached a clock module - the software which reads the time/date from the module must take all four digits into account. Additionally, the clock module itself must be capable of representing time past the year 2000. This depends on the clock module in use. Typically, clock modules are nothing more than counters themselves with a battery attached to keep them alive when the ST is turned off, so there's every chance it'll carry on working ok. It is more likely for the software to fail. You can check this by setting your clock module time to 23:55 31/12/1999. Wait 6 minutes and boot the machine, praying you see 00:01 01/01/2000 as the date.

As for any other software you run, it again depends on how it stores the time internally. If it uses all four digits you'll be ok - same as above."

Ian Norton asks:

"Does CAB 2.6 or newer do Javascript? in fact does any atari browser that works with sting do java?"

Nick Bales tells Ian:

"Nope. And when you see how slow Java is, even on a PII, it's no bad

thing in my opinion."

Chris Gray tells Ian:

"As far as Java is concerned, the kaffe Java Virtual Machine works on my Falcon under NetBSD. It should be possible to port it to TOS/MiNT/whatever, but it would be a lot of work (especially the graphical bit). I also suspect it would be rather slow (it's slow under NetBSD, anyway).

Great project though for someone who has the time. <grin>"

My old friend, Terry May, posts this little bit of news:

"I downloaded and checked out the CAB 2.7 demo. It was nice of them to include English resource files. That should hopefully speed up the process of porting it to English.

Unfortunately, all docs are in German. Would one of our kind German friends please translate the update docs, so we know what's changed since v2.5?

From what I could tell, the demo, like the 2.0 demo, is fully functional, save for hotlist support, and the occasional alert to remind you that you're using a demo.

It doesn't seem to have changed a whole lot. It has a few new menu entries, which are nice, though not essential. I was hoping the problem with forms would be fixed, but I still get "Transaction failed" on even the simplest of forms. Is that a CAB.OVL problem?

I'd feel a lot better about it if I knew exactly what all has changed."

Roger Cain tells Terry:

"It seems to recognise 'Cookies'."

Dennis Bishop tells Roger:

"It's the cookie suport that I need, that's why I can't use the recycler web page a lot, they use cookies."

Steve Hammond tells Dennis:

"If you are using CAB 2.7, CAB.OVL (1.2904 by Dan Ackerman) and STinG you will have "cookie support". And you can still use the Recyler Web page (at least the one in LA) with CAB 2.0 (2.5) by just hitting the "Reload" icon within CAB when you want to go to a new page. This is after trying to get to the next page and you wind up on the one you started with. I know it works - I have done it for some time. And I know that the Demo version of 2.7 works in this regard also as it will load the next page correctly where 2.5 will not.

Other sites that now work correctly are Yahoo, AltaVista, my old friend the Citroen site in Canada that would not load under MagiC4.0 + a host of others. In fact I have been able to get to some problem sites with the 2.7 demo that have caused problems with Opera 3.21 and my PC (not to mention NetScape).

NOW - when is 2.7 going to be available in North America?"

****Good question!** After playing around with the demo a bit, Terry May comes back and posts:

"One neat thing I noticed tonight was that it gives you the ability to save the background image. Before you had to go into the cache, find it, and copy it manually. The new method is obviously much easier and faster.

Another nice new feature is that when you open up a link in a new window, it immediately opens the new window, so you can see what's happening in the status bar. Before you had no idea anything was even happening unless you looked at the receive light on your modem.

Unfortunately, you still can't use Alt-B on your original window, once you close your additional window. You have to click on the left arrow to go backwards."

Alexander Clauss, the author of CAB, tells us:

"Some Web servers refuses to send any cookies if the browser is not Netscape Navigator or Internet Explorer. Maybe you can configure the CAB.OVL for STinG so that it tells the server that CAB is "MOZILLA". Then it should work. PPP-Connect 1.4 which comes with CAB 2.7 does this, so cookies will work even on those stupid web servers.

And of course you must switch on the cookie support in CAB."

I don't know if Alexander wrote PPP-Connect or not, but in either case I must say that unless the new version is faster than the one that shipped with CAB 2.5, use STinG instead! It's much faster and allows you to use ANY STiK/STinG compliant client (NEWSie, POPWatch, etc.) instead of only the programs provided by ASH.

Well folks, it's getting late and I want to get back to re-installing my software, so we'll end here and pick up next week. Oh, by the way, for those of you who are interested, something scrambled my partition info for my C drive. The only fix available to me was to rewrite the partition info. Unfortunately, this also has the effect of erasing all the data that the partition was holding. Thank goodness for backups!

Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

EDITORIAL QUICKIES

Once upon a time, a beautiful, independent, self-assured princess happened upon a frog in a pond.

The frog said to the princess, "I was once a handsome prince until an evil witch put a spell on me. One kiss from you will change me back into a prince.

Then we can marry, move into the castle with my mom and you can prepare my meals, clean my clothes, bear my children and forever feel happy doing so."

That night, while the princess dined on frog legs, she kept laughing to herself and saying, "I don't think so!"

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